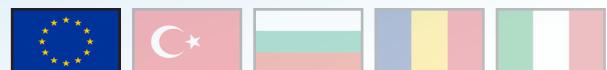


# GUIDELINES Book for the **‘BROAD SWEEPS OF IMAGINATION’ METHOD**



English-Language Edition



BROAD SWEEPS OF IMAGINATION

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## SUMMARY OF THE ‘BROAD SWEEPS OF IMAGINATION’ PROJECT

The ‘Broad Sweeps of Imagination’ (BSI) Project is a project of the Comenius Multilateral Projects of Life Long Learning Programme and was accepted in 2007. The BSI project has brought together partners from Turkey, Bulgaria, Italy and Romania and has been carried out over two years. The partners include:

- Göztepe İhsan Kurşunoglu Anatolian High School in Turkey (*coordinating institution*)
- Kadıköy Provincial and District National Education Directorate in TR
- ICCF (Intercultural Cooperation Foundation) in Bulgaria
- Valahia University Targoviste in Romania
- FENICE (National Federation of Teachers Centre of the initiative for Europe) in Italy

The project implementation began by training more than 40 teachers in BSI method at a teacher training course held in the four partner countries (TR, BG, RO, IT). Workshop participants tested BSI, adapting it to their educational environment and have produced materials included in this guidelines book as examples of good practices.

The main aims of the BSI project include:

- Disseminating a new teaching method to redress the widespread deficiency in communicative language teaching and usage.
- Supporting diversity in the context of language-teaching methods through an adaptation and dissemination phase of the BSI method.
- Proving the universal applicability of this innovative method.
- Helping enhance the quality and European dimension of being a language teacher.

Finally, we have produced several concrete outcomes for the BSI project:

- The BSI Guidelines Book, published in partner states’ languages as well as in English, encompasses the basic principles of the BSI method.
- A specially created e-platform which supports the teachers’ work, available at [www.bsiproject.com](http://www.bsiproject.com).
- An International Teacher Training Course Programme for in-service foreign-language teachers has been elaborated and tested by the partner organisations in Romania and will be placed in the Comenius Catalogue at the end of the project.

## PREFACE BY PELİN GERÇEKER

Over the course of my profession as a teacher, I have discovered that the students who have learnt all the details of grammar rules are often still reluctant to speak English. Even if they can successfully complete the most challenging worksheets full of puzzling grammatical exercises, they struggle even to introduce themselves in the target language.

Although we were using many well-intentioned techniques, we used to centre on grammar. We were nervous about not being able to cover the grammar syllabus—reported speech, passive voice or clauses. At the same time, we never seemed to worry about the students' language acquisition. As a language teacher, my mind was occupied by the grammar syllabus. I felt it was crucial to give supplementary material full of exercises asking students to supply the correct tense, fill in the blanks, rewrite and so on. However, when I began to follow the teachers' book strictly, I realized that my own exams and worksheets did not reflect the methodology of the course books, which sought to encourage language fluency.

The student teachers in their last year at the education faculty began to visit our classes as a part of their training, and we began discussing and negotiating this dilemma between the worksheets or exams and the methodology of the book. In 2001, one of these trainees, Zuhal Yılmaz Doğan, made me realize that by following the teachers' book, we could succeed in creating happy and satisfied language learners. Instinctively according to my students' needs, I added several elements to the learning process, and my colleague Zuhal named all the elements according to the methodology. In those years, David Fay used to be an education manager at Oxford University Press (now he is an English language officer at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow). He encouraged Zuhal and me to give seminars to foreign-language teachers.

So in 2001, we began a fascinating journey with my wonderful students and my amazing colleagues. We've discovered that if we can delicately create an imaginary atmosphere of real life in a country where the target language is spoken, students become more likely to adapt themselves into the context without even being aware of the learning process. Each one adopts a different foreign identity to use in place of their own Turkish names. Although they were not young learners (at about fifteen years old), they could

*Students become more likely to adapt themselves into the context without even being aware of the learning process.*

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orient themselves easily to this magical atmosphere. During this colourful learning process, we arrived gradually at the ‘Broad Sweeps of Imagination’ (BSI) method. Now, my students speak English anywhere. And not only with me, but among themselves!

For me, one of the most rewarding aspects of the BSI Project has been the wonderful opportunity to meet foreign-language teachers from several different countries. By participating together in an international project, all of us at BSI have been able to establish roots in a multicultural community. Because the project is based on international cooperation, it is easy for BSI teachers to come up with motivating ways for students to interact with different cultures, from e-mail pen pals to shared readings and more. We have discovered that the BSI method applies wonderfully to languages other than English as well.



Pelin Gerçekler

The BSI method is organic and continues to improve with the input of its practitioners. At the International Teacher Training Sinaia, Romania, between 27 April and 3 May 2009, I discovered that I had to emphasise the crucial issue of grammar acquisition. As a fed-up language teacher, I used to tell beginning teachers that we should never focus on grammar, even when we follow the normal language syllabus. Yet we now know that language structures and vocabulary are embedded in the context—text, dialogues, songs, etc.—and reinforce each other. The grammar syllabus is hidden in our minds, and we do not announce this during the learning process. Students learn the language without being aware of it.

With the BSI project we have a great opportunity to meet language teachers from different cultural background and we go on our fantastic journey by enriching the BSI Method and inspire other language teachers from all over the world to create their own ways in order to make their students secured and language speakers and writers.

With this volume, we hope to share our goals, methods, and success stories with teachers who want to give their students the gift of language. As teachers of foreign languages, when we focus on teaching communication, we foster not only speakers of foreign languages but also more sensible, intellectual and happier individuals.

## A THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time, language learning was all about grammar and translation. The grammar book was God and the original text was king. Then someone remembered that language must also be spoken and so the texts—with their stories, heroes, heroines and pronunciation—were introduced into classrooms, with lots of practice, repetition and fun.

Some European teachers put the ideas together and took the next, necessary step. Of course, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are important. But the purpose of language is communication. We need language to read and to speak and to write in order to express our emotions, dreams, sensations and thoughts. Since expression is probably the most important function of language, it does not need to be perfect but should communicate our message.

Together with this focus on communication came a focus on the human: the ‘whole person’ as an integral part of the learning process. Good teachers should also be good psychologists. They should understand the way that emotions affect their students’ learning.

What is the result of implementing this new thinking? In English-language learning, we observed an explosion of creative production: Students’ books are filled with readings, essays, creative stories and conversational problem-solving. And students learn more, too.

Today it is clearer than ever that there is a need to use language for the sake of communication, not for grammar.

As long as schools have taught foreign languages, teachers have sought better ways to foster language learning, employing different approaches, methods and techniques. As late as the early twentieth century, we would have encountered the ‘grammar translation method’, widely used to teach Latin (a language which was rarely, if ever, spoken outside the classroom). Starting in the 1930s, language teaching ‘went academic’ and developed in different pursuits, in accordance with the respective needs of practitioners. The urgent need for foreign-language speakers brought about by World War II inspired two new methods: ALM in America and Situational Language Learning in England. Yet the relative ineffectiveness of such memorization-based teaching made it clear that learners’ cognitive factors were being ignored. Linguists proposed ‘cognitive language learning’, emphasizing that the teachers should treat learners differently than robots and consider their mental capacity. But, as we know, simply emphasizing mental capacity alone is not enough to teach language in the

*Today, it is clearer than ever that there is a need to use language for the sake of communication, not for grammar.*

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*Planning the BSI Project*

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best way. Using insight on students' emotional and communicative needs, four major 'affective humanistic methods' have emerged in recent years: Silent Way, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning. Most recently, many pedagogues have expressed interest in 'communicative language learning', emphasizing the way a language learner can adapt the language as a tool to enable interpersonal interaction in daily life. This insight has had a massive impact on foreign language teaching, changing not only the methodology but also the syllabuses themselves.

The 'Broad Sweeps of Imagination' (BSI) method presented in this book is one of those new types of teaching methods in foreign-language teaching, in which learners are given relatively more autonomy than the other conventional teaching methods. One can certainly see traces of other methods in BSI, for we strive to prompt the learners' communicative competence and creativity, but we expand on goals and methods. The BSI method is founded on the following major principles:

- developing the learner's communicative competence (*Communicative Language Learning*)
- encouraging the active participation of the learner with an entertaining language-learning period (*Suggestopedia*)
- helping the learner to be aware of the culture of the foreign language by making him or her responsible for learning in that culture
- enabling to learn the language in real life and to experience the target language during learning (*Total Physical Response*)
- improving creativity while learning the target language
- fostering cooperation while learning the target language (*Cooperative Language Learning*)
- integrating our perceptions of the world through the five senses and expressing them in our mind through our neurological processes in order to internalize the language learnt (*Neuro Linguistic Programming*) and
- accepting the learners in a holistic way, together with their feelings and thoughts.



One of the BSI teachers from Romania argued that the development of a country began with the mind and soul of its teachers, and this statement is one inspiration for raising the quality of education in the countries which came together to develop BSI. In Turkey, the proponents of BSI envisage the internationalization of the country through language and culture, enhancing the opportunities and abilities of communication in a foreign language. In this case, the BSI method challenges old didactic patterns in a social context where they seem to be the only ones accepted. On the other hand, in developing BSI in other countries such as Romania

where the range of choice in teaching becomes more extensive (Affective-Humanistic approach, communicative method, etc.), it may be that only some elements of this method are genuinely fresh (coding and decoding by colours and key pictures, for instance). Yet we believe that by emphasizing the positive aspects of older learning theories while introducing useful new elements and a new approach, we can make language learning an effective and lifelong process in a variety of national contexts.

Whatever class management tools a teacher of languages may choose, it is eminently clear that the main factors in the educational process are human personalities and the quality of the interaction. By focusing on these internal and communicative aspects of language learning, we can begin to head in the right direction towards the main goal we want to impart on our students: 'Go for it! Learn new languages!'



A BSI Classroom in Turkey



## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Knowing at least one foreign language is indispensable in today's world, regardless of one's age. Yet language learning is a challenging prospect no matter how convinced one might be of its importance. The essence of foreign-language teaching should lie in applying the learning environment to usage in everyday life. However, even if the learners have been taught a foreign language for years, they are often reluctant to speak the language, since the traditional grammar translation method is still widely used. Although many teachers continue to apply traditional teaching methods in their classrooms, learners themselves hope to speak and use the language that they are learning.

Therefore, in choosing to teach with a new method, language teachers should consider some important factors. The most important step is to define the needs and interest of the learners. Learners would like to communicate in the target language. Communication can best be enabled when the teacher succeeds in creating a supportive and exuberant atmosphere. Students feel encouraged to embark on flights of creativity, while the rest of the class watches with enormous concentration, as people do when they are watching their favourite comedian, or a comic actor in a movie. A classroom approach that includes opportunities for improvisation

and creativity is hugely beneficial to both teachers and students. It aims not only to teach the grammatical structure as a tool in a hidden way but also to introduce learners to content areas such as art, science, music or physical education using the target language. Essentially, language shifts from being used exclusively for language-based purposes and becomes a vehicle to teach and learn non-language content. In a nutshell, BSI focuses on learning content in a foreign language, rather than learning the language itself.



An active BSI classroom: teaching 'Typhoon Opal'

Regarding the benefits of BSI, our surveys and feedback from teachers in school settings have demonstrated that language learning was enhanced by taking the emphasis off learning the language itself and placing it on learning content. Teaching non-language content in the target language makes the use of the foreign language more contextualised, i.e., a connection is made between the target language and real-life situations. Thus, language can be used in a more real and meaningful way and also provides a variety of stimuli for a broader range of learners. In addition, dedicating time in content-

area classes in the target language allows children to receive additional exposure to the foreign language naturally without requiring extra time in the curriculum.

Since BSI teaching harbours different elements aimed at facilitating teaching in a learning cycle, it is possible to see its success reflected in learning atmosphere. All BSI lessons are easily implemented as if they were a kind of ‘language club’. Clumsy pictures (CPs), which associate each word and its sentence, and visual cues are used whenever possible to help learners understand content and to maximize target-language use in the classroom. Another excellent way to encourage learners to work on topics in the target language at their own pace is through project work. In essence, teachers need to adapt the integration of language and content to their own needs and circumstances while striving to find ways of using the target language in creative ways. Language and non-language teachers can and should work in collaboration to decide on subject areas, themes and topics that can be performed in the target language and to set goals and objectives according to their particular situation.

This method works in getting students to learn the target language and has actually inspired them to continue developing their language skills themselves. Learners are able to construct countless original sentences on different topics (using lexical items or patterns) in the target language; CPs created from the texts and enriched with dramatization are initiated by the learners. In our case, we encouraged our students by changing the name of ‘homework’ to names they would appreciate (Cosybam, Zuzu, Sponge Bob, Garfield, etc.) and changed ‘exams’ to open-book ‘reflections’. Students are free to use their CP notebooks during reflections, since they only include CPs, and they are supposed to write down their reactions to the topics discussed during the BSI lessons (anything from typhoons to kites, international food, and the environment). They not only write wonderful essays but also communicate in the target language using phrases, daily language and phrasal verbs in a meaningful way to give the right emphasis. In reading students’ work, you actually feel as though you were travelling along with Jacques Cousteau through the oceans on board his boat *Calypso*, as though you can even touch the coral reefs.\* It is easy to get inspired yourself!

This book of guidelines has been prepared in collaboration with over forty foreign-language teachers all across Europe with the aim of inspiring other foreign-language teachers with the BSI method. We believe that the elements used in this method will be of invaluable help to those teachers seeking to encourage their students to *communicate*. In the next pages of the book, we will review the main elements of the BSI method: enthusiasm, teaching pronunciation, correct use of texts, clumsy pictures, dramatization, out-of-class activities, reflection files and evaluation. Each of these sections is accompanied by teachers’ own reactions to implementation. Part 2 of this book of guidelines provides readers with a set of examples and tools to implement the BSI method in daily lessons. The book concludes by discussing how we are disseminating the BSI method through the BSI E-platform, sharing implementation strategies with foreign-language teachers around the world.

\* This lesson is inspired by the heroes and heroines in the course book *Pacesetter*, published by Oxford University Press in 2001.

## I. ENTHUSIASM

Learning sophisticated grammar rules, even from a colourful and modern textbook, often kills learners' enthusiasm long before they can enjoy the advantages and the pleasures of the ability to communicate with representatives of foreign cultures. Teachers should thus know how to make learners enthusiastic about learning languages. Therefore, the main foundation of the BSI method is that an imaginary atmosphere inside and outside of the language classroom—if it is delicately crafted—will help students adapt to using the language in context, without even being conscious of the learning process. To realize the goal of promoting students' enthusiasm, two main factors should be taken into account. One of them is the physical setting in the language classroom; the second are the affective factors in language-learning process.

The first step is to create a positive classroom environment which is bright and colourful. This can be accomplished by decorating the classroom with scenes from a country where the target language is spoken as well as with pictures or photos related with the topics in students' course books. Learning is facilitated in a cheerful environment carefully created to eliminate some of the barriers that the learners bring to language learning (Freeman 1986).

*A cheerful environment can be carefully created to eliminate some of the barriers that the learners bring to language learning.*

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Second, we can use classical music or music related to the topic. The use of classical music at a lower volume during the lesson helps students avoid the feeling that they cannot be successful in learning languages in several ways. For one, Lozanov (1978) argues that students' mental reserves are stimulated through integration of the fine arts. Furthermore, playing music related to the topic allows students to associate the topic with music meaningfully as well as to evoke positive emotions toward language learning.

Language teachers may use some further steps to create an environment which fosters enthusiasm for language learning. The teacher may, for instance, let the students use colourful costumes and clothes in order to bring the life to the classroom. The last step related to the physical changes in the classroom is making different seating arrangements to enable interaction between the learners. Semicircles or circles are the best choice to prompt communication. If the students believe that learning is fun and enjoyable, it helps to overcome the barriers that learners perceive toward speaking new languages to create enthusiastic learners who want to learn the language effectively.

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Since the BSI method maintains that the motivation of the learners is the stepping stone for further learning, language teachers should also consider learners' affective factors to create an inspiring classroom atmosphere. Using special mottos or greetings to motivate and encourage the learners are the simplest but the most effective ways of engaging the learners in the lesson. Instead of using routine greetings such as, '*Good morning, how are you?*' teachers can use different and attractive greeting words such as '*My wonderful amazing students, my daisies and roses!*' to show them that he or she really cares about them and wants to make them feel important. This can be the sign of the beginning of a new and exciting experience in language learning.

Second, students assume new identities to reduce the inhibitions they have against language learning. They choose a new name, job, country, personal history, character (likes, dislikes, etc.) and call each other by their new identity. Their names are not supposed to be names from English-speaking countries—they choose names such as Latisha, Reni, Laura, Efe, Can or Marina, for instance. Students research their character and learn about their new country of origin. Part of the success we have seen in students who adopt identities has to do with the fact that they wear these new identities like a mask or costume through which they can comfortably communicate in English (or the target language). Accordingly, Lozanov (1978) suggested that having a new identity makes the learners less inhibited and more risk-friendly, since their performance is 'really' that of a different person. An added benefit is that they carry the responsibility of learning everything about the culture they belong to in their constructed environment.

Applying pair and group work activities can be another way of creating an enthusiastic atmosphere. According to Gattegno (1972), using pair and group-work activities enables students to develop a motivational sense of cooperation. One example of an activity to encourage enthusiasm is to use "rhythmic repetitions" in the classroom while teaching the language. Larsen Freeman (1986) declares that such an activity is useful for 'freeing the speech muscles' and evoking positive emotions towards the language that she or he is learning.

While settling all these arrangements in our classrooms, we should certainly not forget the role of the teacher. In the framework of the BSI



*A BSI classroom in Turkey: Enthusiastic students are less inhibited to learn the foreign language and more willing to take the risks necessary for effective learning.*

method, the teacher should behave as a *language counsellor* rather than an authority on the learning process. As recommended by *Counselling & Community Language Learning* (Curran 1977), the language counsellor is someone who is skilful at understanding the struggle students face as they attempt to internalize another language. By understanding students' fears and being sensitive to them, she or he can help students overcome their negative feelings and turn them into positive energy to further their learning. Accordingly, the teacher should know how to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom to lower the *affective filter* of the learners. The affective filter plays an important role in Krashen's (1985) acquisition and learning theories, which assume that if learners feel relaxed, positive and safe, input can be more easily absorbed and processed. However, if the affective filter is raised, it blocks input from being processed. The learner's state of mind and his or her personal response to the activity of learning is central to the success or failure of language acquisition. Students can be more motivated to learn the language, for instance, if we use more attractive words for 'cold' classroom tasks, such as 'cosy-ambam' instead of homework or 'reflection' instead of exam.

## *Having a new identity makes the learners less inhibited and more risk-friendly.*

The last but the most important factor is the quality of the input given to the learners. According to Krashen's input theory (1985), the input  $i$  should be slightly above the learner's current knowledge level,  $(i+1)$ . The language to which the learners are exposed—teacher talk, listening activities, reading passages and the language heard and read outside the class—needs to be understood by them in order not to frustrate students with a heavy mental load, but it should also include information and guides for reaching the next level.

### REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

#### TURKEY

EMİNE KİREZ

[Yeşilköy Anatolian High School / ISTANBUL]

This year I am teaching introductory German to tenth-grade students. During the first lesson, they were all very worried about the learning process. But when we explained to them that grammar wouldn't be a concern for us in this class, their worry disappeared within days. They are now concerned with learning *German*. Using dramatization during

lessons from the very first encounter with German is important to make the class fun and encourage students' enthusiasm. And the number of things they like to do just emphasizes that enthusiasm: They have chosen their identity, name and country; they have written about who they are; and they have made posters which we put up around the classroom. We use a tape recorder with classical music in our class. This calms the students and gives them confidence. Not only do they speak with confidence in class, but we also talk with each other online. Sometimes they say they haven't understood. Then I explain it to them in English. They can make a comparison between English and German. Unfortunately, we have only two lessons of German each week, and the lessons pass very quickly. But they learn to communicate in German, and that is fun for them!



*Learning German in Turkey*

### GÜNEŞ ÇİÇEK

[Selim Sırrı Tarcan Primary School / ISTANBUL]

I work in a public primary school and I've chosen a fifth-grade class to apply the BSI method. I have thirty-two students from the same area. They are all very excited and happy about the project, as are their parents. To encourage students' enthusiasm (an integral component of the BSI method), I greet my students using different adjectives every month. Each time I use a new greeting phrase, they are excited to find out what the next one will be. In this way, they also learn various words and adjective phrases without being aware of it. I also try to be warm and friendly to my students; when they see me with a smiling face, they are more enthusiastic, more active during the lesson. Finally, choosing new identities is both exciting for students and helps them learn about different cultures. After choosing a nationality, we made ID cards and covered the back our national flag. Hence, the students feel secure about their real identities. They think they are playing an enjoyable game and the new identities are a part of that game.

JOHN SKAGEMARK

[Kartal Doğa Primary School / ISTANBUL]

Students found it really interesting and exciting to have different names and identities from all over the world. These new identities simply reflected their interests in football, music, science, movies, and other 'favourites'. Using Power Point presentations on names of countries and nationalities as well as model dialogues, I have practised pronunciation with them. Today, some friends from Sweden visited the class, which created an authentic situation where the students had to use English to communicate. I believe it was very successful. Later this week we'll look back to review the first units and learn a new song.

ROMANIA

AURELIA NICOLAE

[Radu cel Mare School / GAESTI]

Before starting the lesson, I tried to choose an attractive topic of interest for Europeans today. I created the proper atmosphere by bringing some recycled materials into the classroom. I wrote messages about the environment on the board and I stuck some pictures printed from the Internet. I offered my students some resources, including authentic texts related to the topic which reflected real-life situations. I made sure that students could create new presentations, different from the texts they have studied before, using originality and their own vocabulary. I gave them different identities: They weren't students anymore, but responsible people fighting for the environment, for a better life. In order to create an enthusiastic atmosphere, I used group activities to motivate my students more. I printed their presentations and they made posters out of them.

AURICA MANU

[Dragomiresti School / DRAGOMIRESTI]

I always believed in the main idea behind the BSI method: If we can delicately create an imaginary atmosphere in and also outside the language classroom, students will become more likely to adapt themselves to use the language through the context without even being aware of the learning process. In the three schools which participated in the BSI method, the relaxed atmosphere created during the meetings of the participants at the three schools was a major cause of its success. We used nicely decorated classrooms or halls, very suggestive music with moments of dancing and diverse themes from the books. The music related to the topic helped the students' mindset a lot, and the whole integration of fine arts created a meaningful and positive atmosphere towards English-language learning.

## ITALY

MARINA VILLONE

[Liceo Labriola / NAPLES]

To make our students eager to learn the foreign language, it is important to create a nice, relaxed atmosphere among them. Of course, we can ensure this most effectively through our own behaviour during the class. But outside of the main lesson, I have often introduced short, quick games either at the beginning of the class (when they look gloomy because of a maths test, for instance) or at the end when there are only a few minutes left and the lesson plan has been completed. In one game, I tell the students something like, 'If you were born in March, clap your hands' ... 'If there is an L in your name, stamp your feet' ... 'If you have a brother, stand up' ... 'If you like chocolate, shake your head', and so on. It's often noisy, but it's fun. Another game I often use starts with writing a single word on the board (let's say 'yesterday'). Then I say, 'Maria, please give me a word beginning with Y' (yellow). I write the word on the board, asking another student to give me a word beginning with W (war), and so on. I try to keep the pace as quick as possible. The game ends when the bell rings or when the funny word-serpent (*yesterdayyellowwar....*) covers most of the space on the board.

## BULGARIA

ILIANA BLAGOЕVA

[133 A.S. Pushkin High School / SOFIA]

It is very important to create a pleasant, relaxing atmosphere in the classroom in the process of learning a foreign language. Playing different games involves the students, especially the younger ones, into different activities—speaking, writing or listening—and they become an active part of the teaching/learning process. When divided into groups or teams, for instance, students are ambitious to be winners. They focus more on the exercises they are doing, thus improving their skills. For example, my students have had a lot of fun playing the following game: I prepare lists with different words (some of the words are in different forms, e.g. verbs and nouns). Three lists are stuck on the walls and on the board, as the class is divided into three teams. The teams line up in front of the lists. The task is to listen to a short text and every time they hear and recognize a word to touch it on their lists. The winner is the team which has 'collected' the greatest number of words. This activity has always created a vivid atmosphere in the classroom while at the same time improving students' listening skills and revising vocabulary in a relaxed, playful manner.

## II. TEACHING PRONUNCIATION

As linguists and pedagogues began to be interested in total language acquisition, they also analysed the way a child learns the mother tongue and drew a parallel with second-language acquisition. On the basis of this assumption, Blair wrote in 'Comprehension-Based Approaches' (1991: 23) that the nature of human learning can generally be transferred to language learning. In particular, they believed that there is a pre-production phase or 'silent period' in which the learner is exposed to input before she or he is ready to speak for immediate communication. Therefore, it is believed that this silent period is a particularly important phase for loading language input efficiently.

Yet the different linguistic systems of the target and the native languages make this period more difficult than we presume. Some have argued that teaching pronunciation not only makes students aware of different sounds and sound features, but can also improve their speaking immeasurably (Harmer; 2000). Concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed—all these things give them extra information about the spoken form of the target language and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.

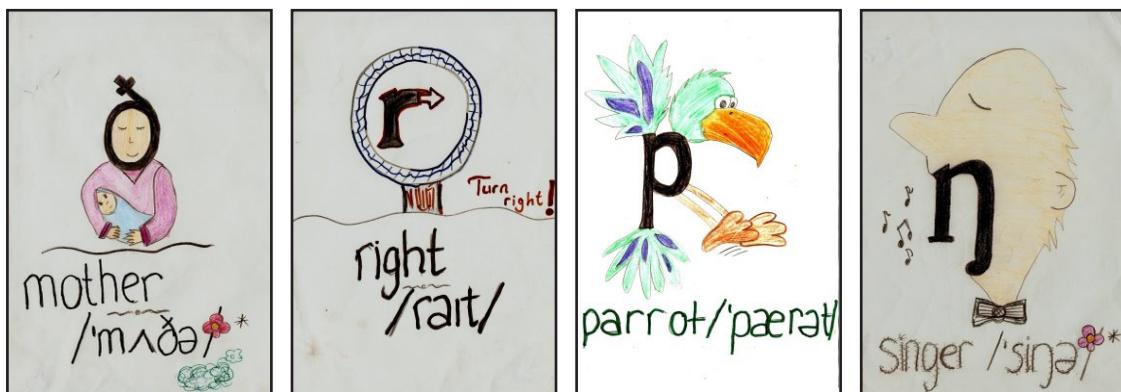
For students to pronounce the target language correctly, they will have to be taught the phonemic alphabet. However, it is believed that sound and spelling correspondence is problematic in language teaching. Some teachers believe that using the phonemic alphabet is crucial for teaching pronunciation, but others are not convinced. Although studying pronunciation with the phonemic alphabet when teaching English is not always obligatory, we believe that there are many advantages of learning and teaching phonemic symbols. For example, students will be able to pronounce the word correctly by reading the phonemic transcriptions in a monolingual dictionary even without hearing it,



Phonetic symbols can improve communication by teaching correct pronunciation.

if they can read these symbols. If teachers and students know the phonemic symbols, it will be easier to explain which mistakes occur and why. These transcriptions can also be used for pronunciation tasks and games.

How should this be implemented in the classroom? Indeed, studying with the symbols can overburden students if they are asked to write in phonemic script. Instead of forcing students to actually write, we recommend teaching the phonemic alphabet with associative pictures to enable recognition of these symbols gradually and meaningfully. For example, if we wanted to teach the sounds of *th*, *r*, *p* or *ŋ*, we could show the pictures associated with the words ‘mother’, ‘right’, ‘parrot’ and ‘singer’ together with the phonemic symbols *ð*, *r*, *p* and *ŋ* and a full transcription of the words /mʌðə/ , /raɪt/ , /paerət/ and /sɪŋə/.



In addition to this procedure, it is an enjoyable and useful activity to repeat words and sentences by making ‘strange’ noises with the learners, exaggerating the pronunciation of the phonemes to emphasize how they are made.

Drawing students’ attention to pronunciation features such as sounds and intonation patterns is also necessary to make them aware of the correct use of the language. To teach all these features of the language, we do not need to separate a whole lesson, however. We believe that teaching pronunciation can take place at any stage of a lesson sequence in *integrated phases*. It can be an integral part of any lesson, and a teacher can draw students’ attention to pronunciation features such as sounds and intonation patterns while they are honing their listening or reading skills. For example, in teaching the simple past tense in English, the teacher can lead pronunciation activities to teach words ending with /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/. He or she can prepare three columns, asking students to put verbs into correct column according to their correct pronunciation in the past tense.

/d/	/t/	/ɪd/
closed	listened	painted

(For an example of a similar exercise, see the lesson plan on ‘daily routines’ included in this guidelines book.)

## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

KEVSER GÜNEŞ

[Kartal Doğa Primary School / ISTANBUL]

I have been working as an English teacher at a private school for more than three years. Thanks to BSI, I learned many new ways to overcome some of the difficulties I have had so far. Speaking loudly, articulating clearly and using appropriate body language are the most important aspects of teaching pronunciation and conveying the right message.

While I have learned that speaking loudly can be used to give warnings or correct mistakes, we do not remain silent in class. On the contrary; we started to shout all together while repeating a word or a phrase. We are singing songs all together and clapping our hands, and we aren't afraid of making a little noise. Second, one should try to articulate as clearly as possible. A teacher often acts as a 'native speaker' for the students and must serve as a good model, especially when they hear words for the first time. Vocabulary and commands should be given in a way similar to the natural and normal rate of delivery. Finally, I came to learn that voice and clear articulation are not the only fundamental concerns for classroom management. In language classes, sometimes non-verbal messages are much more important than the verbal ones. While explaining the meanings of words, the teacher should use facial expressions and hand gestures as much as possible. They should frequently make eye contact with all students, sometimes as a means of warning the students who are not interested in what is being taught.

### ROMANIA

LORELEI VULPESCU

[Serban Cioculescu School / GAESTI]

Teaching phonetics is very difficult, but my goal is to find the easiest way to do it. I have tried a lot of teaching methods for phonetics, and I think the BSI method for teaching phonetics is easier than my methods, so I shall use it in the future.

In Romania there are cassettes for every student's book, and they can listen to the pronunciation of the words while they read. I use cassettes or CDs for every lesson. And there are a lot of songs they can hear and sing. I use classical music related to the topics and students learn more easily when they listen to music. They can also evoke positive emotions towards language learning.

## ITALY

MARINA VILLONE

[Liceo Labriola / NAPLES]

Teaching pronunciation is a boring and despairing business—boring for the students and despairing for the teacher because students seem to forget everything very, very quickly. In an attempt to make pronunciation drills less boring and the sounds easier to remember, I have often used a kind of game. I stick five cards on the wall copied from a big poster of phonetic symbols along with an image, for example: ‘cat, book, bee, bin, boot’. I pronounce the words and ask the students to repeat the sounds after me. Then I divide them in small groups and give them a set of ten to twelve cards with names written on them. I point at a phonetic symbol. In each group, a speaker lifts the card he or she thinks corresponds to the sound and pronounces it. The speaker changes with each sound to be pronounced. At the end, the group with the most correct words wins.

## BULGARIA

SVOBODA GAGAROVA

[Department of Language Training and Students’ Sport at Medical Academy / SOFIA]

Teaching pronunciation in a foreign language is very important, because poor or improper pronunciation can make real-life communication difficult, can cause misunderstandings and can even break down attempts at communication. The problem might be greater with teaching English as a foreign language, as English has a lot of words with similar pronunciation (paronyms) but completely different meaning. For example, my Turkish students tend to confuse ‘care’ and ‘carry’ or pronounce ‘what’ as /vat/.

Because my students are young adults in an intensive course to learn English for specific purposes (medical terminology), the use of the phonetic script symbols embedded in pictures is not quite appropriate. Correcting their pronunciation takes place during the lessons while they are reading or speaking by repetition. That is, after they have made a mistake and have been corrected, they have to repeat the word, phrase or the sentence which they pronounced in the incorrect way. It is a somewhat time-consuming and boring, but it is worth doing to achieve a better understanding of each other in our daily discourse.



*Teaching a BSI Lesson in Bulgaria*

### III. TEXTS IN THE LANGUAGE-LEARNING PROCESS

As practitioners of the BSI method, we support using the language as it occurs naturally within a context. Only then does it become more meaningful than mere language forms, separated words or structures. Therefore, we believe that presenting new vocabulary or structural patterns in a contextual text is the most important part of language teaching. Bancroft added that vocabulary items presented in a context related to real-life situations are memorized better because they are recalled by learners in the context outside the classroom (Bancroft, 1995:6). One of the main reasons behind this is the many roles that texts have to play in the language-learning process:

- to learn meaningfully through personal experience,
- to understand the target language's culture,
- to improve the learners' knowledge of the world,
- to improve reading skills and motivation to write.

Since they play a crucial role in language teaching process, it is important to evaluate whether a text is structured in a reasonable way to ensure that the texts we use match our teaching method. In selecting the course books and the texts, we should take some important points into consideration. First, teachers should choose more interesting and attractive topics for the learners since their positive opinions and feelings towards the teaching materials are essential to make the learners motivated to learn and experience the language. Second, the topics in the texts should correspond to learners' needs, levels and ages. Third, the text should be an authentic reflection of the real life and culture of the language being taught.

*Texts must not only be effective in their own right—they must also be used effectively in the classroom.*

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As Larsen Freeman (1986) argued, language cannot be separated from culture: Culture consists not only of literature and the arts, but also people's everyday behaviour. Teachers must present the target language within the target culture, since the two are indivisible. Finally, one should consider selecting the texts involving famous, important and strange characters to help students identify with the characters in the story, such as Marie Curie and Captain Cousteau. In addition to this, as it was recommended in Common European Framework of Reference (CEF-R 2000) selecting texts to improve the world-knowledge of learners is necessary if we want

to improve learners' creativity, taking them into worlds that they have never thought or known before.

Of course, all these properties could be prepared by native language users, since they have an innate sense of the feeling and context of the piece. In addition to this, they are more competent in creating a text involving original sentences in the target language. However, the regular syllabus should not be ignored in the process of creating new texts. The texts in our course books should review previous topics, structures and words to enable the retention of new learning. As a final step, presenting texts along with current topics and colourful pictures according to the levels of the learners is crucial to draw the attention of the learners to make them eager to learn and understand the text.

Texts must not only be effective in their own right—they must also be used effectively in the classroom. Focusing on the important points in the text, such as jobs or colours, can be one of the ways; another way is to internalize the main and sub-skills in the texts and to study them as a unitary system. Wrapping the characters up in the texts to enable to experience the language (inside and outside of the class) is the most effective way to internalize the stories as if they were present in real life. In addition, if one would like to make the language of the text even more relevant, it is possible to present the story through using mnemonic elements and symbols such as clumsy pictures (see section IV below). These reminiscent elements not only reflect the words to remind the story in a meaningful way but also make the learning more enjoyable. Of course learning and understanding the texts are not enough to improve the four skills of the learners. As a result, the learners should know how to make a connection with the previous topics in their textbooks and to reflect their understanding and creativity in their work, such as their weekly projects or incredible journals (see Section VI).



*Using texts actively in Italy*

## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

BERNA KALINTAŞ

[Asiye Ağaoğlu High School / ISTANBUL]

An example of a text used successfully in a lesson: Before I started the class, I asked whether my students had ever heard about Maria Skłodowska (Marie Curie). Their answers weren't surprising—they hadn't heard a thing. So, I warmed them up by giving them some information about her. Then I drew clumsy pictures. I emphasized that the text was a story, so they could understand that the events happened in the past. While we were drawing our pictures, I used drama. After we had finished the text, I used role playing. I acted like Madame Curie. Before my lesson began, I researched her life so I could easily answer all the questions students had. Surely my students made lots of mistakes while they were asking questions, but I didn't correct them during this part of the lesson. At the end of the lesson I handed out frequently asked questions about her in order to see their mistakes. For me, my lesson was successful. We were all impressed by her life. Now, my students know that no matter how much our life is taught, we can achieve whatever we want!

### ROMANIA

MARILENA UNGUREANU, MONICA SPIRESCU and MANUELA DAVID

[I. Al. Bratescu Voinesti School and Radu cel Mare School / TARGOVISTE]

Using literature in the classroom requires teachers to overcome several of the impediments students feel when reading. Learners need to learn how to live with uncertainty. Reading implies inferring and dealing with ambiguity, and students need to take an active role in deducing meaning by applying the context and his or her own life experiences.

Pre-reading, reading and post-reading activities prepared students for extensive usage of texts and provided them with an interesting and meaningful prompt for writing activities. We took the following key issues into consideration: First, literary texts represent valuable authentic material that provides for more subtle, enthusiastic and meaningful learning. They can generate genuine discussions in the classroom. The ambiguity of the text furnishes a stimulus for expressing different opinions. Second, reading, talking and writing about literature activate both affective and cognitive processes. Literature appeals to personal experience and triggers personal response. It also implies analysis of

words, structures, discourse, patterns, content and interpretation. Third, it helps students write when they learn how literary effects are created through language. Finally, literature provides cultural knowledge. It enhances the learners' understanding of some of the many cultural values that English-speaking people have.

### **ITALY**

SILVANA MONE

[Scuola Media Statale Silio Italico / NAPLES]

Storytelling has long been a technique used to learn English, and I think it is a very useful one because it includes and leads to other activities. Storytelling gives you the chance to activate prior knowledge, introduce new language and encourage dramatization. In short, it helps to contextualize the items of the syllabus, offering a field of learning which is meaningful, interesting and motivating while at the same time covering the English work that has to be done. It can also give cohesion to the work: Above all it brings a more informal, lively and communicative component to what at times can be a highly structured and often tedious programme.

### **BULGARIA**

ILIANA BLAGOЕVA

[133 A.S. Pushkin High School / SOFIA]

Storytelling can be part of the activities aimed at improving the reading and writing skills of foreign-language learners. Storytelling helps students to revise their vocabulary and improve their ability to use different grammar constructions. Young learners are highly motivated to create their own stories in a foreign language and thus to prove how good they are at it. Students have fun when they are asked to write or tell a story of their own, especially if the task involves taking on a different, unusual or even alien identity.

My students, for example, always love writing funny stories in which they have to describe something unusual, e.g. the life of a dog or a button on someone's coat from the viewpoint of the dog or the button respectively. Their altered perspective on life, living creatures and other people around them helps students develop not only ways of expressing diverse experiences in the foreign language but also helps them develop their imagination and deepen their understanding of the world we live in.



*Clumsy pictures are used to illuminate texts in a meaningful and memorable way.*

## IV. CLUMSY PICTURES

As we stated before, ‘context’ is a crucial feature of BSI; we teach new grammar and language points to students even as they remain unaware of them and just focus on the theme of the context. To translate context into language results, our method combines different teaching techniques and procedures for learning new information and for rapid building of communicative skills in the foreign language. One of the BSI method’s innovations is the use of visual elements (‘clumsy pictures’) to give learners the opportunity to harmonize their previous learning within the current context. Clumsy pictures (CPs) are quickly drawn mnemonic icons representing the most important vocabulary and phrases learned in a lesson. By presenting the stories in various ways—with CPs for every single word, with only a few CPs or without CPs at all—we both make the passages more visual and memorable as well as encourage activity and performance by enriching CPs with gestures.

We have observed that CPs greatly facilitate language learning and we have found many reasons to implement them in our curricula. CPs

- enable meaningful, memorable learning,
- make the words more concrete to make them more understandable,
- pave the way to using more complicated and confusing patterns or structures,
- create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere,
- activate the learners' creativity,
- promote mental alertness through guessing words and solving puzzles,
- lengthen learners' attention spans,
- engage both hemispheres of the brain for concrete and abstract learning,
- provide a basis for analytical thinking in the target language and
- allow students to acquire language through real-world reflection.

Using CPs helps learners acquire input by using three systems. First, visual representation enables learners to ‘envision’ the word in their mind as well. Second, the pictures are associated with sounds and words using auditory representation. Finally, the kinaesthetic system invokes the internal and external feelings of learners, something emphasised by Neuro Linguistic Programming as well.

Although presenting stories with CPs has many advantages, the procedure of applying CPs should

also be taken into account. Teachers using CPs must take care not to make it become a process of memorizing each word. Accordingly, the steps of applying CPs should be pursued as follows:

- First, draw CPs on the board while making students guess the word it represents. In this way, they can become familiar with CPs and how to use them.
- After guessing the whole page the learners can copy the CP ‘text’ from the board and internalize the text easily.
- Begin to present the text by the help of CPs, one by one, by acting and using gestures. You can write the new word with shaky letters to arouse curiosity.
- After finishing the subject, the learners can draw using drama and CPs.
- Give responsibility to a ‘student of the day’, who can write the transcription of the new words.
- Make students repeat the page and do not forget to make the students work in pairs at the end of each lesson.
- Ask learners to redraw the CPs at home to prevent mere copying of the pages. Teachers can decide what guidelines they want to impose on work at home. Instead of daily worksheets used by other methods, we prefer to use our own products at BSI method, including drawing CPs, incredible journals and more. Teachers can also use pair work and can feel students’ confidence grow. A lively chorus proves they dramatize the passages by heart, so they do not need to memorize. Your teaching process will demonstrate whether your learners have a tendency to memorize or not!

Finally, it will be beneficial to explain that using CPs is not the foundation of our method, and presenting stories through CPs is not always obligatory. Drawing a few clumsy pictures can be used as reminders; especially if the teachers have an advanced class, it takes too much time to draw and initiate line by line. If you and your learners are of CP-enthusiasts, we wish you a fantastic journey through the mountains, rivers, cities, countries you will see and know that you will be amazed by your students’ progress.



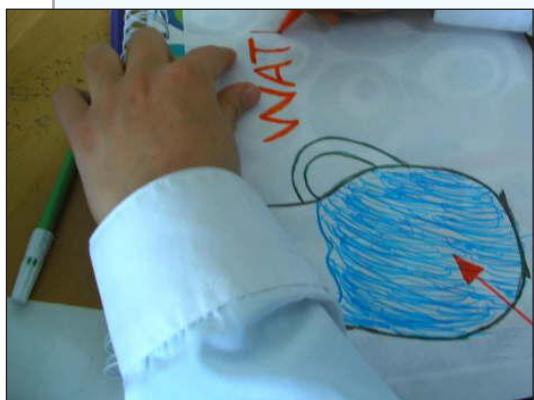
*Teaching dialogues using clumsy pictures*

## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

BANU YURTSEVEN and TESLİME GÖKTEPE

[Ümraniye İmam Hatip Anatolian High School and Fevzi Maresal Çakmak Primary School / ISTANBUL]



*Drawing clumsy pictures in Turkey*

Students are motivated by CPs in many ways. Using CPs made learning new vocabulary easier, which made students happier and more self-confident. They liked to participate in the lessons, repeat words and listen to classical music. In fact, they sometimes listened to the songs they learnt during the lessons outside of class. We would play games and I used gestures and drama when students guessed CPs, and this motivated them a lot. Of course, they used these sentences in their dairies and some of them began to write not only the weekend but also several times during the week. Finally, I decided to get a small present for the student who correctly guessed the most CPs each month, and this really motivates my students. They sometimes even read dictionaries!

CPs are especially important for younger learners, since they like colourful and concrete things like pictures, and they have fun when drawing. But the teacher must be talented at keeping students' attention and willing to try CPs out. Students sense that they are learning the language well and they understand the language-learning process. They realized that fill-in-the-blank worksheets and similar exercises didn't make them speak fluently. Although speaking during break time and using the language was difficult for them at the beginning, now they're used to speaking, and they feel that they have advanced more than students in other classes.

## ITALY

PAOLA D'AJELLO CARACCIOL

[Instituto Comprensivo Statale Maiuri / NAPLES]

I have used clumsy pictures in my middle-school classrooms, and students have responded by being happy and involved. After three months of using CPs, I can say that they are useful because it is a change of activity, students can create situations and they can show their work.

The weaker students are encouraged and their learning curve is easier. The students are able to remember the grammar structures and the functions using the visual aids.

There are a few challenges with using CPs. Some students don't like to draw; they would rather write because it's faster for them. Second, some students say the pictures are 'for children'. Finally, when the sentences are more difficult, they need a lot of time for inventing and writing, and at our school we only have three hours in every class.

I think that clumsy pictures are useful for presenting short structures and sentences or new vocabulary, but they need to be supplemented by other forms of teaching. They can be used to refresh the classroom. I'll continue to use them in the second class next year and will think of introducing the 'second identity' method of BSI. My students are already interested in that.

## BULGARIA

ILIANA BLAGOЕVA

[133 A.S. Pushkin High School / SOFIA]

I find that CPs are especially useful in a class of young learners. Students up the age of thirteen are happy to draw pictures. They think it is fun and easily remember some structure of language and phrases. Sometimes I use my own 'clumsies', but other times I ask students to create their own pictures. The advantages of this approach are that students enjoy themselves and at the same time they learn using their (visual) memory. Sometimes it's quite easy to explain new vocabulary and collocations using clumsy pictures. Although clumsyies can be used in the process of teaching adults, it may be difficult to make them draw. Most adults (including teenagers in the last two years of their high school education) find drawing somewhat boring. They are also more time-conscious and find that drawing is time-consuming and does not serve their aim of taking exams.

Used in the right context, CPs can be useful for explaining some words, collocations and grammar rules. They can also be used for storytelling and creative writing. They can make the atmosphere relaxing which makes the process of learning easier.

## V. DRAMATIZATION

The technique of dramatization enriches the language classroom and gives life to the clumsy pictures. The teaching method should involve dramatization techniques to give meaning to the language students are learning to make our teaching more enjoyable. The BSI method calls for dramatic techniques which focus on getting meaning across using the entire body in addition to words. These techniques are very powerful tools for the language classroom; they

- encourage creativity of thought,
- appeal to reluctant speakers,
- appeal to the more 'physical' learner and
- reinforce an understanding of language as a way to communicate meaning.

Simulations and role plays related to the texts in their course books are the main activities of the BSI method, since many learners derive great benefit from them. Learners simulate a real-life encounter, either as themselves or in the role of a different character. These activities are also tools to explore and express human feeling. By actually taking on roles, the student can come to 'feel' what it is like to be in a given situation. This alternative perspective encourages students to question previous assumptions and judgements.

***'MOVEMENT can go deeper than words.'***

**Jacques Lecoq**

Another way is for teachers to imitate the characters in their textbooks orally or bodily. This imitation can sometimes be repeated with funny sounds, mimics, or exaggerated movements (such as a Mexican dance!) to make it more memorable for the learners. In addition, rhythmic repetitions of the sentences or the difficult words in their

texts are another imitation activity to enable acquisition of the target language. In order to prevent the activity from turning into monotonous repetition (sameness), we make it as colourful as a rainbow, using a variety of sensations such as exaggerating, laughing, crying, anger and happiness.

Because imitation is a natural and spontaneous 'stage' of early childhood development in which a child begins to investigate the world by imitating it, word imitation is an intuitive activity for students. This activity has the potential, as a diverse medium, to enhance cognitive, affective and motor development. By the end of this activity, learners will start to produce words, structures and sentences without even being aware of it. For example, the structure in English "to want someone to do something" is always difficult for students, but students remember and produce the structure easily if you

make it into a meaningful, contextual sentence and repeat it by invoking learners' feelings and moods. This is the essence of Piaget's 'natural learning'. Piaget (1998) notes, 'To express things with gestures, the child must have a mental image of what it is he or she is acting out. Acting out in turn strengthens the 'mental image', inferring that this reciprocal process is 'a natural way of learning' (Piaget; 1998: 3).

The emphasis on real communication in language learning also means that language teachers need to consider context, intonation and body language as well as the actual words in oral communication. Dramatization by its very nature involves all of these elements. Through dramatization, children expand their knowledge of the world; they learn social skills and develop their communication skills. When they take on the role of another character, they consider the thoughts, feeling and perspectives of people different from themselves. At the same time, drama is a natural part of children's play. There is a growing consensus among childhood educators that young children learn best through two experiences: dramatic play and interaction with their environment (Brown and Pleydell 1999).

Finally, dramatization is useful not only for young learners, but also for teenagers and adults. Since learners at advanced ages have various barriers when learning a new language, teachers should attempt to 'turn back the clock' by putting older learners in the position of a child learner. This process of 'infantilization' means making learners involved in the learning process by assuming a different personality and activating of the para-conscious part of the mind. As Larsen-Freeman (1986) noted, achieving the state of 'infantilization' is desirable, since it makes the learners more open to learning. Dramatization activities are ideal in this regard, as they develop all the types of learners' social and language skills. In BSI students are engaged in various activities designed to help them to learn new material and use it spontaneously through gymnastic movements, jumping, screaming or involving the different moods of a story. These activities are varied and do not allow the learners to focus on the form of the linguistic message, just the communicative intent.



*Dramatization can take on many forms, including imitation, exaggeration, movements and gestures.*

## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

#### HANDEGÜL ALTAN

[Göztepe İhsan Kurşunoğlu Anatolian High School / ISTANBUL]

More social and outgoing students are eager to demonstrate their abilities by taking roles and acting out exercises. We also try to encourage the shy ones as much as possible, and it works.

We sometimes make all students repeat the sentences as if they were telling something to deaf people. They use their entire bodies to explain the sentences. Additionally, students act the dialogues with selected groups in front of their friends to practice. Reading exercises in particular were more understandable and enjoyable with the help of dramatization and drawing.

#### BANU YURTSEVEN

[Ümraniye İmam Hatip Anatolian High School / ISTANBUL]

I think that dramatization is at its most enjoyable and effective when it engages with CPs, because students and I use our bodies to guess the CPs and phrases during the lesson. They never forget about either the vocabulary and the text or the facial expressions. For example, in a lesson about rainforests, the text contained the sentence, '*The weather is rainy and sticky*'. When I wanted to explain the word 'sticky', I asked my students to give me a glue, and I stuck my two fingers together. 'Now my fingers are sticky', I said. They all repeated the word, holding up their fingers as if theirs were sticky, too. Now they say they never forget the word and my face while I was saying 'sticky'.

Students themselves prepare some of the texts. They use dramatization when we read texts such as 'Madhur Jaffrey' or 'Madam Curie', behaving as if they were one of them and acting to make the text much clearer. They even like to repeat the dialogues by singing them or by using different sounds, such as those of a roaring lion, an angry man, a crying lady.

### ROMANIA

#### LORELEI VULPESCU

[Serban Cioculescu School / GAESTI]

The teachers should know how to make their students enthusiastic for learning languages. I decorate the classrooms with pictures which represent important aspects of the UK and the USA (maps of both countries and pictures of monuments, cathedrals, museums or interesting places). Of course I also use pictures related to the topics covered in their

books, but when I find something very interesting or representative of either country, I stick it on the wall. I think that new things are very good for them and they will probably be curious and will want to learn more. I encourage them to find new pictures themselves or read something about the picture.

Second, I often use dramatization in the classroom because it is a good way to motivate students to learn English, and they like it a lot. Simulation and role-plays related to the texts are very attractive to the children and they are delighted to do them.

### **ITALY**

**VIRGINIA POMPEI**

[Liceo Scientifico Copernico / NAPLES]

In the BSI method, where the focus is on imagination and creativity, dramatization is a very valuable resource. Dramatization can be used at the very beginning, when students try to transpose themselves into another context ('simulation'), but this technique can also be used to practise the new linguistic structures and to recycle the language students have already internalized ('open dialogues' and 'role-playing'). Last but not least, dramatization is useful to lead the students to become independent in the use of the foreign language. Dramatization ensures enthusiasm and offers a motivation to communicate naturally in English. Furthermore, each student can interact according to his own possibilities. In fact, I have observed that each student performs his most suitable role and builds up the sentences he needs to communicate by himself. In such a way, each one is able to use the foreign language creatively while speaking about typical situations in everyday life.

### **BULGARIA**

**ILIANA BLAGOЕVA**

[133 A.S. Pushkin High School / SOFIA]

In my opinion, dramatization is one of the best approaches in teaching any foreign language. It is also one of the most important features of the BSI method. It can be used to practice new vocabulary or revising old vocabulary. Students learn how to use collocations and phrases as well as how to build their own sentences in a given context. Learners become more fluent and self-confident when they use the foreign language for actual communication. Additionally, role-playing creates a lively atmosphere in the classroom and students have fun while studying at the same time. Another good feature of this approach is that it can be used in classes regardless of the students' age.

## VI. OUT-OF-CLASS ACTIVITIES AND REFLECTION FILES

BSI is an amazing journey that it cannot be trapped behind the limits of classroom walls. It embraces all the processes of life and it achieves its real meaning outside of the classroom. According to the BSI method, to make our learners more autonomous, we should make them use the language not only in the class but also reflect that learning process outside of the classroom. Students should know that they should speak language anywhere and anytime. Teachers can ask students send messages to each other in the target language, via instant messaging or the phone, for instance. It is also better to make the learners speak the target language with their teacher and the peers during the break time to get used to using the language outside of the class.

*BSI is an amazing journey that it cannot be trapped behind the limits of classroom walls. It embraces all the processes of life and it achieves its real meaning outside of the classroom.*

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Beyond the school day, teachers can arrange speaking clubs with her or his students to speak about the events and characters in their course books or to play various games or activities. Such activities make the language-learning process more enjoyable for learners. Recording is another way students can use the language out of the classroom. Learners can record the text that they have learnt or they can record new stories and dialogues inspired by the texts in their course books. They submit their recordings to their teacher for feedback. The last but the most important out-of-class activity is writing diaries. We call them ‘incredible journals’. We think that it is the most essential activity since the learners can reflect on their lessons, explore their success and difficulties and come to

a great understanding about learning and language. While many parents have commented that they would prefer to see worksheets where students ‘cannot forget’ grammar rules, we have found, on the contrary, that students learn the rules without being aware of it, through reflection.

The Reflection File combines everything produced during the learning process, including drawings of CPs, passages written at home, incredible journals and so on. In addition, students compile their daily homework into their Reflection File. Daily homework (given, of course, by a different name) should include at least the following two components.

- Drawings of CPs associated with the passages read in class and students’ writings on the basis of those CPs and their memory of the teaching process. Students never, ever memorize the sentences with pictures; they stick as patterns in their minds.

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They have naturally coded them with pictures or mimics in a lived experience guided by the teacher.

- Original sentences written with at least three new words and their pronunciations. Students write not only the new word with its transcription but also the word in its original sentence. Words alone can easily slip our mind, but a word in a sentence with a story can be easily remembered.

For the teacher, such work is the most effective way to measure students' progress. Since the incredible journals reflect the learners' experiences related to the topics that they have learnt, they are an effective tool to understand how students react to lessons and how they progress. As an example, we can take a look at the following incredible journal based on authentic student accounts of her language learning:

### Diaries

We have learnt English without being aware of it, like a baby. We are filled with joy. So, we reflect our happiness, attitudes, knowledge..... to our diaries by the help of brainstorm. We have no idea about Passive, Relative Clauses, Gerunds and the name of the tenses....As a matter of fact, we aren't interested in them but we have already used them. We would like to share one of our countless experiences with you here. When we were learning the Passive Structure through a context 'How are magazines produced?' the grammar approach wants to make us realize that the articles are written but we have no idea who writes them but we can't understand what it wants to emphasize, because we aren't used to thinking in a grammar way. During the lesson when we met that question that we were supposed to answer 'we don't know' we insisted that we could easily know who wrote the article, because every newspaper's article has got a writer's small photo with his/her name. Since we get the sentence as a river which flows naturally and we can't notice its hidden grammar sense in it. However, immediately we understood what we were supposed to answer and we laughed our head off. As you can realize, we never ever think in Turkish or grammar rules while speaking, writing so it doesn't smell Turkish, it sounds natural. Now that's the right time to show you some pages of our amazing diaries. PS tells when we write these pages, which contexts help us to brainstorm.

14th December 2003

Oh, hello my dear diary. I'm very sad, because the great Turkish football player Cemil Özkan died at his home in Istanbul yesterday at the age of 28.

This morning I learned it. Oh, I was shocked. He was a great football player. He was a young man. Oh, God. Only two days ago I interviewed with him.

Now I am thinking about him-his sentences, his face, everything about him.

But you know my dear diary we must continue to our life. Yes, I don't want to write more than about these things. See you.

PS: Starter, the news about JACQUES COUSTEAU.

25th February 2004

Hello my dear diary. Yesterday I watched a film. Its director is Caroline George. But now I want to tell you an interesting story about this film.

Three months ago Steven George who was the famous film director died. He died of cancer. People think that he took his illness from smoking for many years. Oh, people who are smokers are in danger from smoking.

Anyway, he lived for about 70 years. But I think that wasn't a long time for a director.

He made his first film after he finished university. His first film's name was "Love or Money". It immediately became an enormous hit.

Steven George won his first Oscar for it. But during his life he won 4 Oscars.

But he began to be ill after he won the 4th Oscar. That was when he started to make his new film. He was in Morocco.

His wife Caroline went there to be with him. When he died, Caroline couldn't see how she could continue her life without him. But she took his old job. She made that film before she went back home. She made that film for her husband.

Yes, I watched it yesterday. It was really good. See you.

PS: Tony Bullimore's amazing survival, Marie Curie, Carol reefs.

11th May 2004

Hello my dear diary. As you know we will have a magazine and the teacher wanted me to interview with a famous person and guess who I did with. I interviewed MICHAEL JORDAN!!! That's perfect, isn't it? How could I contact him? Oh, well, to persuade him to have an interview, I slept in front of his house for four days :) Of course, not like that. It is just a joke. My uncle works in a sport magazine and he talked to MJ for me.

At first I told that I really wondered about his size. I learned that he is two metres tall, he wears size forty eight shoes and he weighs ninety eight kilos. That's amazing.

MJ was born in New York in 1965. He had a really happy childhood and of course he started to play basketball when he was really young.

We talked about his career. His basketball career started after he finished the college. After that, he joined Chicago Bulls and with MJ, Chicago Bulls won the NBA championship every year in a row between 1992 and 1997. Also MJ the Olympic gold medal twice.

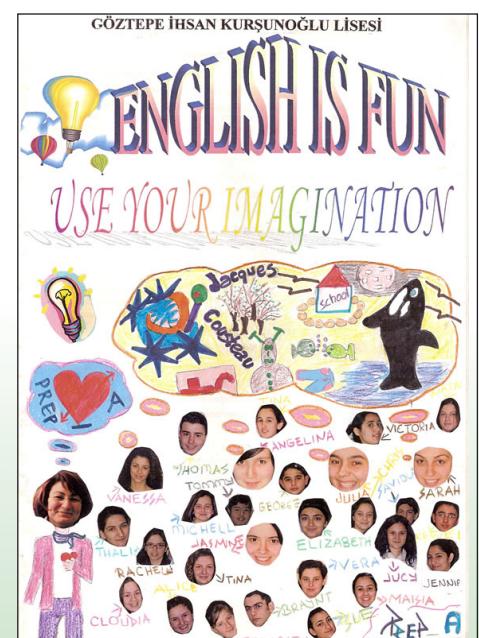
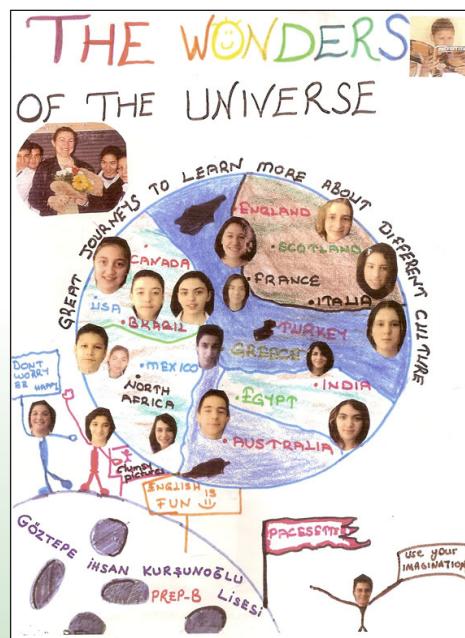
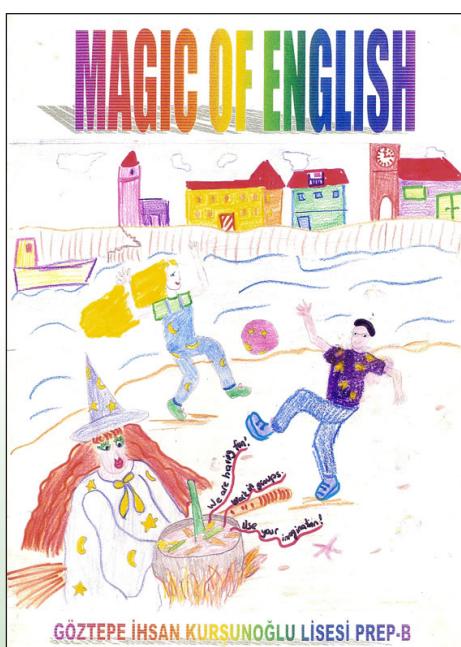
I told him that "For four years you were basketball's king. NBA named you the most valuable player of the year many times. In those years your name meant that the team which you joined would be successful. But do you think that there will be a king again? And he immediately said "yes". He told me that basketball needs a king to have fans and make players ambitious and I asked "So, who will be the king do you think?" He told me his opinion. He thinks that Shaquille O'neal will be able to be the king of the court in the next years; because he attacks fast and defends strongly. Also his size is good enough to be the king of the court.

After this interview I felt really happy and I understood that Michael wasn't the king of the court just, because of his talent. Also his personality is amazing. He is ambitious and clever. But he is never vain. I know that when we played basketball he was helping the other players to be much better. He is helpful, kind and lovable at the same time.

Oh, I hope one day I may see him again. See you.

PS: Meet the champion and Personality types

JADE (Burcu Özcan)



## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

BAŞAK YAYLALI

[Ümraniye Genç Osman Primary School / ISTANBUL]



*Başak Yaylalı and her students*

Writing letters can be one of the best ways to practise the target language, so we organised a pen-pal project as part of the BSI method. The main aim is for learners both to use original sentences and to share and be aware of other cultures. They become more sociable over time, sending not only the letters but also some small souvenirs or postcards.

Young learners also like to come together after school. First, they prepare a dialogue about the subject they have learnt before. They assemble costumes and other materials and then choose a suitable place to enact their dialogue, such as a hospital, a café, or a zoo. They take videos and photographs and present the result in the classroom.

HANDEGÜL ALTAN

[Göztepe İhsan Kurşunoğlu Anatolian High School / ISTANBUL]

Students draw CPs in their picture notebooks during the lesson, without words. Students also use a separate class notebook to jot down new words they learnt during the lesson according to the context, with their phonetic symbols. They also have vocabulary section ('reflection file') in their files, which are divided according to topics such as jobs, environment, colours, etc. When they go home, they draw coloured clumsy pictures of the topics and the original sentences associated with the pictures. Finally, students also keep diaries, one of the most important parts of the method. In these diaries they create their own stories inspired by the textbook's phrases and topics.

We check their vocabulary notebooks ('reflection files') and diaries ('incredible journals') every Friday. We only underline mistakes instead of correcting them with a red pen. We return their notebooks and ask students bring them back for checking after they have found and corrected their own mistakes. This is an effective second step of error correction and reinforces what students have already learned.

## ROMANIA

LUMINITA BARBOI

[Dragomiresti School / DRAGOMIRESTI]

I have always kept out-of-class activities in mind so my students could gain more knowledge in English with enthusiasm and lots of fun. In this respect, my students wrote several diaries ('incredible journals') in which they could use their rich imagination. They fancied themselves as different people involved in different events with friends, parties, travelling abroad and exciting experiences; they wrote about their creative and positive dreams about fairies who could change their life. In making these diaries, students drew interesting, colourful things and used their handwriting carefully. I think that diary-writing is the most essential activity, since the learners can reflect on their lessons, explore their success and difficulties and come to a great understanding of learning and language.



Speaking clubs in Romania

MARILENA UNGUREANU, MONICA SPIRESCU and MANUELA DAVID

[I. Al. Bratescu Voinesti School and Radu cel Mare School / TARGOVISTE]

In accordance with the BSI method, I behave as a language counsellor. I have always been very close to my students, smiling and sensitive, understanding of their fears, helping and encouraging them to overcome their negative feelings and turning them into positive energy to further learning. My learners have always felt relaxed, positive and safe and their response to the activity of learning has been very successful in part because they were very enthusiastic to write essays for the school magazine.

We used interesting topics and involved a variety of creative work to put language use in context. In one project, we wrote, '*Imagine yourself living on a deserted island for six months. Decide upon a historical period and a geographical position. Draw a map of the island. Describe its relief, fauna and flora. Use drawings if necessary. Write a message which you want to send in a bottle. Write a diary page.*' A second prompt we used was, '*You have just received a letter from an unknown person, in which you are told that a week from today, for one hour, if you wish, you will be granted one of the following two requests: to become either a tiny human being or a giant. You think this is silly, yet, you decide to try it, just for fun. On the appointed day, at the fixed hour, your wish comes true.*' Students wrote an illustrated diary page describing the 'experience' they had for that hour, the place, the people they met, their perspective on things, how they felt, and so on.

## ITALY

MARINA VILLONE

[Liceo Labriola / NAPLES]

I admit I haven't used recordings for a while, but when I used this technique in the past, I found it effective. The students were very keen on recording presentations of themselves or of their best friends, organizing short conversations with their schoolmates, telling short stories, etc., drawing their inspiration from their school texts. They were very proud when they could give me something recorded. However, I often felt overworked with the extra listening and the necessity to give them feedback on the work.

## BULGARIA

SVOBODA GAGAROVA

[Department of Language Training and Students' Sport at Medical Academy / SOFIA]

### Techniques for Projects, Project Work and Project Dissemination

The success of a particular approach depends to a large extent on the institutional support it gets from the school authorities and the school community. For this reason, it is a good idea for classes employing the BSI method to be presented with opportunities to show the output of their work to the larger school community.

This can be achieved as the BSI students are regularly given the task to work on small projects as out of class assignments. The output of their project work can be later presented in the *school newspaper*, at a (special) *school festival* or at a similar event in communal school life. *Public displays* of student work, either in school or on a *blog*, can be tied to personal projects completed throughout the school year..

The topics for such project assignments are infinite and can be tailored in view of the students' age and foreign-language level, their particular interests and the opportunities the school institution can provide.

Throughout my career as a teacher, I have used out-of-class activities extensively as an incentive for improving students' command of the target language, in my case, English. In the past, we have incorporated high school students' preparation and participation in international projects and their dissemination of the project outcomes among the school community. All the elements described in the BSI method, such as taking pictures and making galleries of the events (or recordings for advanced students), distributing student bulletins (a kind of formal diary) with their impressions and assessments of the meetings and excursions, even creating a website for international students' virtual communication, and more, were applied with a great success—creating fun while actually doing hard work.

When I am teaching mainly adults, on the other hand, I find it quite useful to exchange text-messages and emails with my students, something they appreciate as a kind of 'real communication'. Such out-of-class reminders boost their confidence in managing the language on a daily basis.

## Photo Album of Active Learners at Doğa Schools in Turkey



## VII. How Is EVALUATION ACCOMPLISHED IN THE BSI METHOD?

*In formal evaluations, it is preferable to conduct an integrative test which assesses not only the learner's accuracy, but also her or his fluency.*

It is not possible to evaluate the learner's performance in two fields—accuracy and fluency—using only one mode of evaluation. Whatever evaluation method is used, it should be in keeping with the principles of BSI method. In formal evaluations, it is preferable to conduct an integrative test which has a real communicative function to assess not only the learner's accuracy, but also her or his fluency. The learner who has the most control of the structures and vocabulary is not always the best communicator! Learners are asked to write a paragraph or a dialogue about the situations and the events in their course books rather than being asked to answer a question which deals with only one point of language at a time. Characters can be changed or situations can be transformed to fit the learners' experiences or to create new and related scenarios. Such an evaluation can both achieve a connection with students' daily lives and make them feel more secure about how they answer.

In scoring the formal examinations, according to BSI, marking becomes more reliable when a learner's performance is analyzed in much greater detail. Instead of just a general assessment based on right-and-wrong, marks are awarded for different elements. A marking system can be used for evaluating different skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening) or a general analytic profile can be prepared. For each separate criterion, it either provides a separate 'analytical scale' (Table 1) or adds together test criteria to assess the learners' separate skills (Tables 2 and 3) The resulting analytic profile might end up looking can be seen on pages 43.



*Conducting evaluations in Turkey. Evaluations can also be based on classroom performance or student projects.*

Beyond formal evaluations, another way to evaluate students' progress under the BSI method is to use alternative evaluation systems. This kind of evaluation is more essential to create a relaxed atmosphere for accelerating learners' performance. They are conducted on learners' normal, daily class performance rather than through formal tests, which would kill students' ease and fluency. Teacher can conduct alternative assessment activities in a number of ways:

*Table 1: The General Analytical Profile of BSI Exams*

No	Test Criteria	Illustrative Scales	Max Points	Threshold	Student Points
1	Range	General Range			
		Vocabulary Range			
2	Accuracy	Grammatical Accuracy			
		Vocabulary Control			
		Punctuation Control			
		Spelling Control			
3	Task Achievement	Using Original Sentences (Thinking in English)			
		Organization and Content			
		Coherence (Use Your Imagination)			

*Table 2: Analytical Profile for Writing Skill*

No	Test Criteria	Illustrative Scales	Max Points	Threshold	Student Points
1	Grammar and Syntax	Range			
		Accuracy			
2	Vocabulary and Spelling	Range			
		Accuracy			
3	Task Achievement	Content			

*Table 3: Analytical Profile for Speaking Skill*

No	Test Criteria	Illustrative Scales	Max Points	Threshold	Student Points
1	Pronunciation	Accuracy			
		Fluency			
2	Vocabulary and Grammar	Range			
		Accuracy			
3	Interactive Skills	Intelligibility			
		Repair Strategies			

\* Tables 2 and 3 were modified in accordance with the suggestions of the participants of the International Teacher Training Course in Sinaia, Romania (2009).

**Projects** • Projects are in-depth exploration of a topic or field. They aim to involve the learners in the learning process and promote autonomous learning. A teacher asks learners to prepare their weekly or monthly projects related to the topics in their course book by changing and adapting them to their life.

**Incredible Journals** • Incredible journals enable students to develop an awareness of the learning process. Writing diaries by narrating stories from the life of the heroes and heroines from their text books is one of the most beneficial activities to revise and repeat the topics, structures, patterns and vocabulary that they have learnt before.

**Reflection File** • A reflection file is a kind of revision activity completed by drawing CPs and re-writing the original sentences according to the units in students' textbooks.

**Classroom Performance** • As an assessment tool, classroom performance can be evaluated in several innovative ways. On one hand, *class presentations* can be conducted with oral reports on projects or other investigative activities. For example, learners can dramatize the events and topics in their course books with their peers by using their body language and clumsy pictures as reminders. Second, learning contracts are a kind of structured method whereby the learners design and implement manageable learning activities in consultation with their teachers. For example, learners could collaborate to prepare their own magazines to explain their learning process.

Finally as Harmers (2004) stated, to compensate for the limits of classroom time and to counter the passivity that impedes true learning, learners need to develop their own learning strategies to become autonomous. Of course this does not happen automatically. It is believed that teachers have an important role to play in strengthening learners' autonomy by giving them opportunity to get used to self-study. Therefore, out-of-class activities and alternative evaluation methods are essential tools in aiming toward greater learner autonomy.

## REFLECTIONS FROM BSI TEACHERS

### TURKEY

EVRİM BAYRAM

[Mustafa Saffet Anatolian High School / ISTANBUL]

At first, students were very worried about the BSI reflection (examination). Because it was not the kind of exam they were used to having, they resisted the BSI exam. They felt relieved, though, when they heard that they were allowed to use a dictionary. During the exam all of them stayed busy drawing CPs and writing paragraphs. They were clearly working hard. After the exam they were tired of writing so many things, but still they were worried and

nervous about their potential grammar mistakes. When I handed back the exam papers, they were really very happy to see that they could understand and produce something on their own. Even the weakest students learned not to be worried about exams any more.

### **ROMANIA**

LUMINITA BARBOI

[Dragomiresti School / DRAGOMIRESTI]

The assessment was a very positive one and all my students involved in these creative activities could get very good marks. More than that some of them got the first prize in the English competition organized in April 2008 in Targoviste. I hope that what I have got during the training course and during the implementation in my daily teaching will mean an important step forward in my future activity, too.

### **ITALY**

VIRGINIA POMPEI

[Liceo Scientifico Copernico / NAPLES]

Dramatization is very useful in the assessment phase. It ensures a very relaxed atmosphere, and that's why I often use this technique to check the students' progress and to evaluate the linguistic and communicative competence acquired by them. Students are usually given a card on which they can find cues and information. Students are then required to build up a dialogue by following the instructions on their cards. Gradually, the cues and information given become more detailed. In fact, they are structured on the basis of the assessment criteria.

### **BULGARIA**

SVOBODA GAGAROVA

[Department of Language Training and Students' Sport at Medical Academy / SOFIA]

Involving the students in assessment is a very important element in the contemporary teaching/learning process. The BSI method pays special attention to this component as a kind of regular feedback to build up an emotional relationship between the teacher and the students. To have students assess their own progress in language learning is also important for the development of their sense of responsibility. Currently, I am using group discussions at the beginning or the end of every school day as a kind of tool for 'peer pressure' on students who underachieve or to praise those who have done well over the course of the day or week. It is also a good way to clear the air and sort out emotional or other misunderstandings, as well as making group decisions on how to improve our mutual work and cooperation.

## THE STORY OF A BSI LESSON

### The Water Cycle

The teacher enters the classroom with a big smile. Frank Sinatra's song 'Singing in the Rain' is playing in the background as the teacher greets her students. She says, 'My amazing, wonderful students how are you today? I am feeling fabulous as I have got a colourful picture describing the journey of water through the universe.' This picture is the first slide of her slide show. It depicts the magical cycle of water. Step by step, the journey of water is illustrated with slides. The teacher is using an article (copied below in italics) to focus on key vocabulary, but the students cannot see it. The teacher asks questions in order to heighten curiosity. 'My bright students, do you like the rain? Why? Why not?' The teacher creates a fantastic atmosphere through words and emotions. 'Close your eyes,' she commands and begins to talk slowly and softly, stressing every word's feeling: 'Now, outside of my window, it's raining. Listening to the rain and thinking about something is the best thing to do on rainy days. I also like walking in the rain without the umbrella; I like the feeling of the rain skimming over my face. I like the snow too, but compared to the rain, I like the rain better. What about you? Do you like the rain? Come on, let's talk about it.' Some students like walking under the rain, since it is romantic. Others dislike it, since it brings dark weather with a pessimistic and nervous atmosphere. They enjoy their chat about the rain and the teacher makes jokes.

Gradually, the teacher emphasizes the importance of water in life. Students agree on the crucial need for water. The magical and colourful clumsy pictures of the first sentence appear on the screen. As you know from reading Part I, every CP is associated with a word. Students easily guess the first sentence: 'Rain comes from the water in the sea.' 'This is an amazing fact,' the teacher suggests, and all the students feel amazed, as if they have already found out the secret of universe. They begin to chat about the rain and they wonder if the drops of rain are salty like seawater. Most of the CPs which continue to appear are similar to those on the first slide's illustration of the water cycle, so they are familiar with the pictures and they establish confidence with the facts. After explaining certain processes such as evaporation, condensation and so on, the teacher asks students to find the processes using CPs. They turn the first slide, and students point out the process in question. (To illustrate the word 'find' using CPs, the teacher draws a happy face with a big smile and the words 'Eureka, eureka!' written in a speech bubble. The students thus have an opportunity to learn or remember how Archimedes discovered buoyancy. The students laugh their heads off when they hear the story about the 'Floating Bodies'! Archimedes took to the streets naked, so excited by his discovery that he had forgotten to dress, crying 'Eureka!' meaning 'I have found it!') In this way, the students also become more aware of world culture through the help of CPs.

After guessing the CPs in the sentence, the students repeat them in rhythm. They all enjoy repeating the sentences like a song or using all their feelings (laughing, anger, loudly or just as a whisper). Finally, they repeat the text in pairs, using gestures and rhythms. They feel as if they were travelling with the water through the rivers, the sunlight, the clouds. Every

student in the class feels as enthusiastic as the members of the *Dead Poets Society*. When the bell rings, they wake up. However, their mind is subconsciously full of colourful, lively CPs. Gradually their dreams and their daily lives will be enriched with kites, planes, festivals, typhoons and all the topics brought up in class.

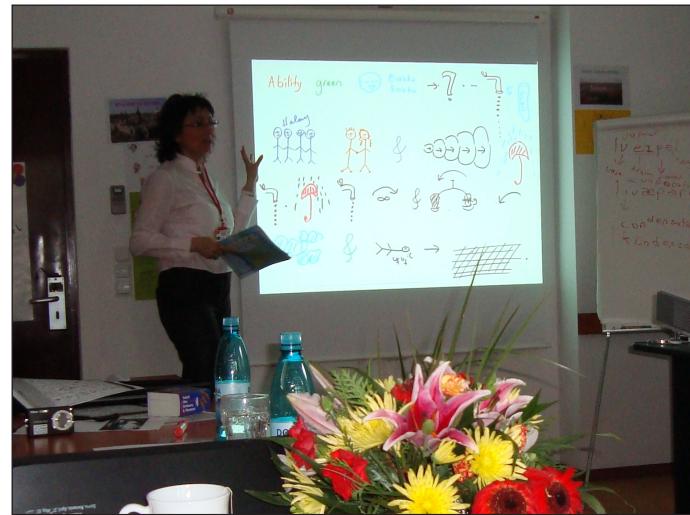
At home they are also ready to surf the Internet, talking enthusiastically with foreigners and writing things like, '*I don't know the season in your city, I don't know the weather in your city too, and does it often rain? Come on. Let's talk about it, I really want to know what's going on in your city.*' Happily, the following responses begin to appear: '*I do like the rain as long as it doesn't rain all the time. It is spring here, so it is the season for rain. I really like the rain when I know that we need it. If we are in a drought, rain is definitely welcome.*'

As language teachers, when we realize that learning a foreign language means communicating, we can create not only people who speak the target language, but also people who are more sensible, intellectual and happy. Using students' enthusiasm as a guide, elements such as drawing pictures or drama can reinforce language use in context. The performance we have seen in ourselves and in our students at the end of the term is representative of what we can achieve in class through a semester by transforming into different characters, reading and researching these new identities, keeping reflection files and incredible journals, drawing colourful pictures and acting with passion.

*"Rain comes from the water in the sea. First the sun shines on the sea. It warms the water. Can you find this? The water becomes water vapour. This process is called evaporation. The wind carries the water vapour up into the sky. Can you find this? High up in the sky the air is cooler. When the water vapour meets the cooler air, it becomes very small drops of water that form the clouds. This process is called condensation. Can you find this? The small drops of water join together and become rain drops. The rain drops are bigger and heavier than the clouds and fall to the ground. It is raining!!!! Can you find this?*

*If it is very cold or high in the mountains, it snows. Find this. Rain falls into the rivers and the rivers carry the water back to the sea and it starts all over again. This is the water cycle."*

(Incredible English, Oxford University Press)



Teaching the water cycle

## THE GOLDEN RULES OF KARTAL DOĞA SCHOOLS' TEACHERS

A BSI teacher should first and foremost keep an open mind toward new ways of learning. To practise the BSI method in the best way possible, a teacher needs to use every one of the five senses. This method is a holistic approach toward the learning process.

A BSI teacher spreads enthusiasm among his or her students by creating a wonderful classroom atmosphere together with them. He or she also acts as a guide into the rich world of language learning. A BSI teacher is one who provides students with enough knowledge to build their own space shuttle to take them to the stars.

A BSI teacher must use the target language 'any time, anywhere', not only with the students but also in talking among themselves. The credibility of creating a new atmosphere depends on the teachers' own ability to enter the new environment by using the target language at all times.

A BSI teacher sees the importance of using dramatization in the learning process. He or she uses dramatization as a tool to let the students express their feelings and to create an environment where the students can make use of their language. Dramatization is a way of enhancing cognitive, affective and motor development.

A BSI teacher uses language texts that are engaging from the students' perspective. The texts should also enable the students to learn about different topics and should work as a window to the world.

A BSI teacher makes sure that people around the world learn the same pronunciation for the target language by using the phonemic alphabet. The purpose of this is to eliminate any barriers that arise between different people around the world if local accents influence the target language to a large degree.

A BSI teacher acts not as a passive performer of the BSI method but takes active part in enriching the method by sharing his or her classroom experiences with other practitioners.

The BSI method has its roots in a multicultural country and therefore seeks to be a means of building bridges between different cultures. At every possible opportunity, a BSI teacher tries to create ways of motivating learners to interact with different cultures. E-mailing pen pals, reading about other cultures and so on, are ways of broadening students' minds and therefore increasing their motivation to take part in this multicultural world using their target language.

The BSI classroom is not only a place where an incredible atmosphere should be created but also a forum where students can be engaged in the learning process. Every student should have the right to express and also influence the different paths that need to be taken to reach the necessary level of knowledge in the target language.

Assessment in a BSI classroom is made in several different ways; each assessment should be designed to ensure the learning process rather than creating an unnecessary 'exam stress'. The students learn for life, not for an exam at a certain time.



### RECIPE FOR A GREAT BSI LESSON

- ✓ A BSI teacher should start the lesson with a diverse, colourful warm-up session. A magical atmosphere of curiosity should be created using clothes, music, gestures, etc.
- ✓ The original sentences of a dialogue, story or article should be given in these stages:
  - 1-*Dramatization with Clumsy Pictures (if desired)*
  - 2-*Introduction of the new words with their pronunciation and within the original sentences*
  - 3-*Clumsy Pictures can be drawn by students in their reflection files (only the pictures, not the sentences, as the students are supposed to remember them).*
  - 4-*Work in pairs. (This session of the lesson is very valuable, as the students will have a chance to repeat the original sentences to each other by using the CPs.)*
- ✓ The lesson can be coordinated with the desired output. The students should prepare and put their pages into their reflection files using the titles related to the topic. They should write the original sentences in their incredible journals.

Prepared by Teachers of Doğa Schools  
John Skagemark, Duygu Yaman, Kevser Güneş, Filiz Erdemir

## ACTIVITIES FROM BSI CLASSROOMS - TURKEY

### Lesson Plan on Daily Routines

**Target age:** 10 +

**Aims:** To heighten students' awareness about daily routines by creating a 'monotonous' atmosphere; to teach the different pronunciations of -s (/s, z, lz/) with verbs of the third person; and to initiate the learning process naturally without having students be aware of the process.

**Time frame:** 2 academic hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** The teacher enters the classroom with a big smile. She greets her students saying, *'My amazing, wonderful students how are you today? I am not feeling fabulous now.'* The students are surprised: They are not used to seeing their teacher unhappy and they would like to learn the reason. The teacher explains:

*'My life is so boring; I always get up at 7 a.m., have breakfast and get dressed. Always at the same time. Always the same routine.'* (The teacher imitates the sound of the train) *'Chug, chug, chug... Always chug, chug. Oh, my daily routine is so monotonous. What about you? Is your life monotonous like mine?'* (**10 minutes**)

**L1, Step 1:** Sing the song about the daily routine. Students copy the teacher's actions. The teacher exaggerates some words using gestures, expressions or stress. Students take interest and begin to sing along, imitating the teacher when she cries, laughs, shouts or whispers. (**10 min.**)

*This is the way I wash my face, wash my face, wash my face.  
This is the way I wash my face, so early in the morning.  
This is the way I brush my teeth, brush my teeth, brush my teeth.  
This is the way I brush my teeth, so early in the morning.  
This is the way we hang up our clothes, hang up our clothes, hang up our clothes.  
This is the way we hang up our clothes, so early in the morning.  
This is the way I put on my coat, put on my coat, put on my coat.  
This is the way I put on my coat, so early in the morning.  
This is the way I button my shirt, button my shirt, button my shirt.  
This is the way I button my shirt, so early in the morning.  
This is the way to tie my shoe, tie my shoe, tie my shoe.  
This is the way to tie my shoe, so early in the morning.  
This is the way to zip my jacket, zip my jacket, zip my jacket.  
This is the way to zip my jacket, so early in the morning.  
This is the way to brush my hair, brush my hair, brush my hair.  
This is the way to brush my hair, so early in the morning.*

**L1, Step 2:** Project PowerPoint slides of one of the classroom students onto the wall. (All through the semester we suggest using the students as characters in PowerPoint presentations or in other activities to create familiarity with the activity and develop an association with the language.) Ask students to formulate sentences by matching students with pictures of activities. As the character represents the third person singular, they repeat the verb adding -s. However, they should not focus on using -s as a grammar point. They go on imitating their teacher and repeating the sentences shouting, crying, whispering, etc., as in Step 1.

**L1, Step 3:** As the students immerse themselves into the context, the teacher can make them aware of the different pronunciations of -s. The teacher pronounces the sounds and asks students to put them into correct column. (*15 min.*)

<i>/-lz/</i>	<i>/-s/</i>	<i>/-z/</i>
brushes	zips	ties
washes	puts	buttons combs hangs

**L2, Warm-up:** The teacher enters the classroom singing the same song again, exaggerating as before. Students enjoyed this in the previous lesson and they sing along with the teacher at most for five minutes. The teacher asks them happily if they are ready to play a word game with sounds. (*5 min.*)

**L2, Step 1:** The teacher puts a chart covered with cards involving twenty-four words and the sounds with /-s, -z, -lz/ taken from the song and the text that they have learnt before, such as washes, brushes, boxes, combs, etc. The teacher divides students into three groups (the groups can be defined randomly). Each group is charged with one sound. The first group is responsible for finding the words end with /-s/, the second group tries to find the words end with /-z/ sound and /-lz/ sound belongs to the last one. Students open the cards one by one and then they try to match the words with their groups' sounds. If the word is not related with theirs, their turn passes to other group and this game goes on till they try to match the words with the correct sounds. As a last resort the class chooses the winning group according to scores accrued during the game. They cheer and clap for the group. (*20 min.*)

**L2, Production:** The teacher tells the students to prepare questionnaires to learn about their peers' routines in groups, they then prepare graphics to see how many of them do similar activities at a similar time. They walk around the classroom, ask questions of each

other and try to collect accurate data. Each group has a presentation, compiling the data they get via questionnaires. The rest of the class takes notes about presentations. (10 min.)

**Motivation:** The initial aim of the activity is to teach the correct pronunciation of each word and to integrate the activity with the grammatical structure being taught (simple present tense). They also get used to working collaboratively with group work activities, immerse themselves into the process enthusiastically and they have an opportunity to each activity through production activity.

**Task:** They draw colourful diagrams according to class data gathered and express the diagram in a paragraph, adding their comments about the results of the diagram to their reflection file.

**Resources:** For song <http://betterkidcare.psu.edu/activities/WashFace.html> (in English), sound chart, reflection file.

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment is aimed at the process. At the end, the teacher asks the students if they had fun during the lesson, what they liked most and what they did not quite like during the structured activities. They might be stimulated to reflect over their (self-) organization during the cooperative stages, their strong and weak points as teams, etc.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively classroom atmosphere), pronunciation, dramatization (oral and written activities), out-of-class activity (Reflection File)

*Pelin Gerçeker*

Doğa Schools

## Lesson Plan on Oral Fluency

**Target age:** 14 +

**Aims:** To promote oral fluency by practising the target language, to improve creative thinking and to enhance collaborative work among learners

**Time frame:** 2 academic hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** The teacher plays an audio recording of a train, asking students to listen. She asks where they are. Students explain that they are on a train. Then the teacher goes on asking some questions about the journey on a train. Have they ever travelled on a train? How was their journey? Do they like travelling on a train or not? (*5 minutes*)

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher gets the students to imagine they are strangers in a train compartment. She divides the students into four groups. One of the groups approaches the front of the class and sits opposite each other, as in a train compartment. The teacher asks the other three groups to prepare some sentences for the passengers in a train in order to involve all students in creating a story. The dialogue could include sentences from their course books, language material recently discussed in class or even off-the-wall sentences (I've heard, '*My girlfriend sleeps in the garden!*''). (*15 min.*)

**L1, Step 2:** The teacher elicits the kinds of conversations people usually have on the train: the weather, their destinations or where they are coming from, etc. She tells the group that when she claps once, the conversation will stop temporarily. When she claps twice, the conversation will go on. During a pause in the conversation, the teacher gives each member of the performing group a line of dialogue prepared by their peers. Performers are to memorise their own line while keeping them secret. After handing out the lines, the teacher collects them again. The teacher explains that performers are to incorporate their secret lines as naturally as they can in the conversation, without the others guessing that it is their prepared line. The goal is to have them direct the conversation so that they can say their line naturally, without the others noticing. Everyone in the



*Zuhal Yılmaz Doğan*

group must have one conversation and not split into two, as the others will miss their lines when they say them. Each time teacher stops the conversation, students remain motionless and wait for the lines of the next group. At the end, students tell each other which lines they thought were prepared. It's a fun activity you can use again and again! (25 min.)

**L2, Step 1:** Following the conversation activity, the teacher distributes sheets containing a comic strip about a conversation among strangers on a train. There are empty speech bubbles and lines of dialogue scrambled below the picture. Students try to put them into correct order and check them with their peers. The teacher asks the students to think about what happens next in the story. Students are divided into groups and given about twenty minutes to compile a dialogue to continue the story. The teacher monitors their process and keeps time. (20 min.)

**L2, Step 2:** Students perform their new dialogues. Audience members use rubrics to grade the groups' performance. According to this feedback, the teacher announces the best performance. (10 min.)

**Production** ('cosybambam'): The teacher praises the students for their performances and asks them to write down the whole activity (comic and dialogue) as a story in their reflection file.

**Motivation:** The main aim is to promote students' communicative competence while making them feel a part of a 'real-life atmosphere'. The activities described are meant to enhance their creativity and oral fluency. Students work in groups and the teacher acts as a facilitator and a resource to give them necessary assistance during the communication activities. Additionally, the teacher monitors the group performance of the students and encourages them to carry out their performance in a cooperative way.

**Resources:** An audio recording of a train, prepared sheets for the comic-strip story

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment is aimed at the process. After the activity, the teacher asks students to evaluate their groups' performance in terms of cooperation and creative thinking. Students are invited to make observations about the day's lesson and what they have learnt. This feedback session can help make the learners responsible for their own learning by becoming aware of and controlling how they use certain learning strategies in the class (structured feedback).

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively classroom atmosphere), dramatization (oral and written activities), out-of-class activity (reflection file)

*Zuhal Yılmaz Doğan*

Cağaloğlu Anatolian Technical and Vocational School for Females

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## Lesson Plan on an Italian Wedding

**Target age:** 15 +

**Aims:** To teach new vocabulary about wedding ceremonies, traditions and superstitions; to practice the simple present tense; to raise students' level of cultural awarenessç

**Time frame:** 2 academic hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** Students listen to 'Wedding March'. They guess what the lesson will be about. (*5 minutes*)

**L1, Step 1:** Different wedding photos are posted on the board and students are asked what they feel about them. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 2:** The next step is writing the key word 'wedding' on the board and making a word map. Students are asked to write new words about the subject. The teacher draws several clumsy pictures on the board according to the vocabulary of the new text. The students are asked to create new CPs. (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** Students are divided in two groups for a reading activity. The first group reads the first paragraphs of the text (provided below) and the other group reads the second half (jigsaw reading). After reading, the first group tells the first part of the story while the second group listens, understanding what happened in the first part of the story. Finally, the second group tells the end of the story, so both groups understand the entire text.

The teacher asks all students to read the text loudly together, first in a normal way, then followed by additional emotions such as laughing, crying or shouting.

**L1, Step 4:** The teacher divides the students into groups and distributes costumes and other materials for a wedding. The teacher whispers each student's role to them. Then, students act the text, using original sentences and dialogues (next page). (*15 min.*)

**L2, Warm-up:** The teacher asks the students if they have ever been at a wedding ceremony. (*5 min.*)

**L2, Step 1:** The teacher divides the board in two parts and writes the customs of both the Italian wedding and native wedding ceremonies. Students are given between five and fifteen minutes to compare the customs on the board and note those which are the same. (In this way, they have the opportunity to compare different countries' traditions.) (*10 min.*)



*An 'Italian wedding' in Turkey!*

**Entrance music** ('Wedding March'), during which the bride and the father walk towards the altar

**Priest:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Priest:** The Lord be with you

**All:** And also with you.

**Priest:** My dear friends, let us ask God to bless (*Bride*) and (*Groom*) in their marriage and to unite them in love. Love is a gift from out of the stars and into your hearts. (*To the bridegroom*) Will you accept this woman as your wife in sickness and in health, in doubt and in trouble, in joy and failure?

**The Bridegroom:** I do.

**Priest:** (*To the bride*) Will you accept this man as your husband in sickness and in health, in doubts and in troubles, in joy and failure?

**The Bride:** I do.

**All :** Congratulations! (*Throw rice, flower petals and almonds.*)

**L2, Step 2:** The teacher writes a chart of wedding vocabulary in different languages on the board. The students are asked to guess which word belongs to which language. In doing so, they learn the roots of the words and realize which ones are similar and which ones are used in all languages listed. Everybody claps and cheers for the student who finds the correct answer. (*15 min.*)

**Resources:** Tape-recorder, wedding photos, wedding dress, bowtie, jacket, robe, rice, sugared almonds, flowers, flower petals, cake, knife, candles, ribbons, balloons

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment is aimed at the process. At the end, the teacher asks the students if they had fun during the lesson, what they liked most and what they did not quite like about the activities. They are asked to make either happy-face, sad-face or neutral-face symbols.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively classroom atmosphere), texts (oral and written narratives), dramatization

**Banu Yurtseven**

Ümraniye İmam Hatip Anatolian High School

## Comparison of Wedding Traditions (Possible Prompt)

Italian Wedding		Turkish Wedding
Bride wears wedding dress	✓	
Bridegroom wears suit and bowtie	✓	
Bride has a bouquet of flowers in her hands	✓	
Father takes the bride to the altar	✗	Bride and bridegroom enter the wedding hall together
Bride throws her bouquet to other unmarried girls		
Bride and bridegroom cut wedding cake		
There are a lot of things tied to the back of the wedding car		
Their friends write funny things on the windows or the bonnet using lipstick or paint		
Sugared almonds are given to the guests		
Guests throw flower petals and rice		
At the end of the ceremony, bride and bridegroom leave for their honeymoon		

## Comparison of Wedding Traditions (Possible Answer Key)

Italian Wedding		Turkish Wedding
Bride wears wedding dress	✓	Bride wears wedding dress
Bridegroom wears suit and bowtie	✓	Bridegroom wears suit and bowtie
Bride has a bouquet of flowers in her hands	✓	Bride has a bouquet of flowers in her hands
Father takes the bride to the altar	✗	Bride and bridegroom enter the wedding hall together
Bride throws her bouquet to other unmarried girls	✗	Bride kisses all of her relatives' hands
Bride and bridegroom cut wedding cake	✓	Bride and bridegroom cut wedding cake
There are a lot of things tied to the back of the wedding car	✗	Towels are tied near the windows
Their friends write funny things on the windows or the bonnet using lipstick or paint	✗	The initials of the names are written on the back window of the car
Sugared almonds are given to the guests	✓	Sugared almonds are given to the guests
Guests throw flower petals and rice	✗	Guests shake hands of the couple
At the end of the ceremony, bride and bridegroom leave for their honeymoon	✗	At the end of the ceremony, bride and bridegroom leave for their honeymoon

*Wedding Vocabulary Chart (For Students)*

Bride	Sposa	Novia	Mireasa	Bridé
Sposo	Marié	Novio	Mire	Bridegroom
Altar	Altar	Altar	Altare	Autel
Ceremonie	Ceremonia	Cerimonia	Cérémonie	Ceremony
Vestido	Rochie	Dress	Abito	Robe
Bouquet	Bouquet	Ramo	Buchet	Mazzodifiori
Couple	Coppia	Couple	Pareja	Pereche
Tarta	Tort	Torta	Gâteau	Cake
Church	Chiesa	Temple	Iglesia	Biserica
Tradition	Tradizione	Tradition	Tradicion	Traditie
Luna de miere	Honeymoon	Luna de miel	Lune de miel	Luna di miele
Casarse	Casatori	Marry	Sposare	Épouser

*Wedding Vocabulary Chart (Answer Key)*

Bride (English)	Sposa (Italian)	Novia (Spanish)	Mireasa (Romanian)	Bridé (French)
Sposo (IT)	Marié (FR)	Novio (SP)	Mire (RO)	Bridegroom (EN)
Altar (EN)	Altar (SP)	Altar (RO)	Altare (IT)	Autel (FR)
Ceremonie (RO)	Ceremonia(SP)	Cerimonia(IT)	Cérémonie (FR)	Ceremony (EN)
Bouquet (EN)	Bouquet (FR)	Ramo (SP)	Buchet (RO)	Mazzodifiori (IT)
Couple (FR)	Coppia (IT)	Couple (EN)	Pareja (SP)	Pereche (RO)
Tarta (SP)	Tort (RO)	Torta (IT)	Gâteau (FR)	Cake (EN)
Church (EN)	Chiesa (IT)	Temple (FR)	Iglesia (SP)	Biserica (RO)
Tradition (FR)	Tradizione (IT)	Tradition (EN)	Tradicion (SP)	Traditie (RO)
Luna de miere (RO)	Honeymoon (EN)	Luna de miel (SP)	Lune de miel (FR)	Luna di miele (IT)
Casarse (SP)	Casatori (RO)	Marry (EN)	Sposare (IT)	Épouser (FR)

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*Reading Material*

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## WEDDINGS, TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Most people in Italy marry in church. Traditionally, the bride arrives late. When she enters the church, the music starts and the bride's father takes her to the altar, where the bridegroom is waiting for her with their best men. Then, the father kisses his daughter and son-in-law, leaves them and joins the guests. The best men (or women) sit to the right and left of the couple during the ceremony. When it is over, the guests and relatives go out and wait for the couple outside, mainly to throw flower petals and rice at them. With this gesture, they wish the couple prosperity and good luck. The bride, too, throws something at the guests: the small bunch of flowers she has in her hands. It has a French name: *bouquet*. Tradition says that the girl who catches it will marry within the year.

After the ceremony, they all go to the restaurant where the wedding dinner takes place. It is often a long dinner!

At the end of the dinner, the bridegroom cuts the first slice of the wedding cake, but the bride helps him by putting her hand on his hand.

Then they give sugared almonds to the guests. They are usually in or tied to a little object we call *bomboniere*. They are given to the people who have given the couple a present even if they don't take part in the dinner. The almonds are never in an even number; there are usually five, an indivisible number, to symbolise that marriage will last forever and that the couple will never part.

At the end of the dinner, the bride and bridegroom leave for their honeymoon in a car that looks terrible! Usually their friends write funny things on the windows or the bonnet/hood using lipstick or paint, they tie balloons or noisy tins to the bumpers and they stick ribbons everywhere. If you don't want people to know you have just married, there's no chance!

*Marina Villone*

## ACTIVITIES FROM BSI CLASSROOMS - ROMANIA

### Lesson Plan on Christmas Customs and Traditions

**Target age:** 11-12 (Level: pre-intermediate)

**Aims:** To develop students' reading ability, to encourage communication about similarities and differences in Christmas traditions and customs among three countries, to improve essay writing, to practice the simple present tense of verbs related to Christmas events, to draw and write Christmas cards in different languages

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher plays a tape with Christmas carols in Romanian, German and French and creates the meaningful and wonderful atmosphere of Christmas time. (*5 minutes*)



*Christmas classroom decoration contest in Romania*

**L1, Step 2:** The teacher shows students several pictures or photos on various topics related to Christmas (Christmas tree, meals, icons, decorated places inside and outside, customs, etc.). (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** The teacher splits the class into three groups and gives students sheets with information about Christmas (see below). (*3 min.*)

**L1, Step 4:** Each group has to read the information about different countries silently. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 5:** Students underline and write a few lines about the features of Christmas in Germany, France and Romania. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 6:** A representative of each group reads the report to the class. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 7:** Every group has to draw and write Christmas cards for the exhibition organized after the lesson. They can use suggestive pictures, photos, stickers and drawings. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 8:** Students sing carols and, where ap-

propriate, may mime the Nativity, dressed as shepherds, Holy Mary, and the Three Magi. (5 min.)

**L1, Step 9:** The most beautiful reports and cards are selected to be exhibited in the main hall of the school and get the highest marks. (2 min.)

**L1, Production:** Homework: Students are asked to write a short essay about what impressed them most about Christmas traditions and customs in the three countries examined.

**Motivation:** As a teacher of English and French born in such a beautiful country as Romania, I have always felt a great desire to teach my students that they belong not only to our beloved homeland, but also to a diverse and unique Europe. I constantly tell them that we, as a European people, are very important, but only in connection with and friendship with both our neighbours as well as with more distant peoples. I always remind my students that, while the European continent is historically bound together, it is also a large multicultural, intelligent, joyful and lively family with similar and different traditions and different circumstances. Christmas time is an important event in many European countries, such as Germany, France and Romania.

**Resources:** Blackboard, task sheets, pictures, tapes, class display, crayons, coloured pens and paper, drawings, glue, specific costumes for Nativity, cassette recorder

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The teacher evaluates students' activity and products during the lesson (cards, role-play, group reports). The teacher also assesses the essays written by students at home.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a wonderful atmosphere through decorations and miming, using musical background and exploiting a meaningful learning context), clumsy pictures, text, dramatization (Christmas carols in different languages and miming)

*Aurica Manu*

English teacher, School No. 1, Titu

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*Reading Materials*

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### Christmas customs and traditions in Germany

One of the German Christmas traditions is to put up the Christmas tree. Usually put up on the 24th of December, it is then decorated by the family. The trees can be bought from special dealers, but many Germans go into the forest and get one themselves.

The Germans celebrate Christmas on the evening of December 24th, a day called *Heiligabend* ('holy evening'). Generally the whole family comes together.

Before the *Bescherung* (time for exchanging gifts) begins, many Germans go to church. Christmas masses often last an hour or a little bit longer. Families with children go to a *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, a children's mass which is usually shorter and dramatised with a *Krippenspiel*, a Nativity play. During the mass, one of the adults at home prepares the Christmas tree, turns on electric lights or decorative candles, puts on some festive Christmas music and places the gifts under the tree. For the *Bescherung*, the only light comes from the Christmas tree lights, so it is a dimly lit atmosphere.

When the family comes back from church, the living room is locked. The children must wait to enter the room until a little bell rings. This bell represents the moment of departure for the Christ Child (*Christkind*) who, according to tradition, brings the presents instead of Saint Nicholas or Santa Claus. The gifts lie under the tree, wrapped in colourful paper, and the children unwrap them before the big Christmas feast. Adults also share gifts while the children often immediately begin playing with their new toys. Many families also prepare big colourful, decorated paper bags for the children, full of chocolates often in the shape of angels of Santa Claus (called *Weihnachtsmann* in German). The bags may also contain fruits like oranges, tangerines, nuts and other little gifts.

Many families sing traditional Christmas songs or winter songs like '*O Tannenbaum*' or play music on flutes or guitars. After this, the family eats a big meal. There are many typical Christmas meals, to name the most important: goose, carp, chicken, fondue (with many types of meat), raclette and lamb.

In almost all families, in all parts of Germany, you find a wide variety of Christmas cookies baked according to recipes typical for the family and the region.

**FRÖHLICHE WEIHNACHTEN!**

### Christmas customs and traditions in France

In France, there are Christmas decorations both inside the houses and in the streets, and they impart a holiday atmosphere. The decorations are lit up and very colourful.

The Christmas tree is always present inside, and it has as its main aim to be nicely decorated and to gather all the family's presents beneath its branches. Legend has it that the first Christmas tree was put up in Alsace in 1521, and its meaning is supposed to originate in the Bible's stories about the creation of mankind, where a fir-tree represented the Tree of Life planted in the middle of the earthly Paradise. This tree was decorated with oblations and apples, representing the forbidden fruit, the source of original sin. The houses are beautifully decorated and lighted, and the members of the family put their shoes or boots under the tree. The presents are brought by *Le Pere Noel* - Father Christmas.

The opening of the presents takes place much later during the night of December 24th or during the morning of the 25th. The presents are nicely wrapped in colourful paper and they are given both to the members of the family and to friends during the following days. For the children these gifts generally consist of toys and sweets.

For Christians, these gifts refer to the presents given to the Christ Child by the Three Magi: gold, incense and myrrh.

In France, a long family dinner called a *reveillon* is held on Christmas Eve. The name of this dinner is based on the word *reveil* (waking), because participation involves staying awake until midnight and beyond. The food consumed is generally of an exceptional or luxurious nature. For instance appetizers may include lobster, oysters, *escargots* or *foie gras*. One traditional dish is turkey with chestnuts. Dessert may consist of a *buche de Noel*. Quality wine is usually consumed at such dinners, often with champagne or similar sparkling wines as a conclusion.

**JOYEUX NOEL!**

### Christmas customs and traditions in Romania

Anywhere there are Romanians who follow Christianity, Christmas is one of the most important religious holidays: It is the holiday of the Nativity and an opportunity for great joy and spiritual peace. It is a day of giving and receiving love and spiritual warmth. This can be seen in the great enthusiasm with which Christmas preparations are made.

Christmas is announced by the children, who customarily go from place to place, singing carols about the Saviour's Nativity. Another old tradition is for the local priest to travel around the community to bless the places and the Christian residents. The icon represents the Nativity.

Romanian Christmas carols are about the moment when the star shone in the sky and guided the three Magi towards the place of the Nativity. Romanian children, three by three like the three Magi, walk from place to place singing the carol 'The Star Rises', carrying a handmade paper star with an icon in the middle.

Christmas Eve begins with the carol 'Good Morning on Christmas Eve'. The families who live beautifully decorated houses receive the carol singers and give them fruits, cookies, different sweets, nuts and even money. Children sing 'Here Come the Carol Singers', 'Oh What a Wonderful Piece of News', 'Little Lord and Lord in Heaven', 'Oh Christmas Tree' and 'The Three Shepherds Have Met'. Almost all schools and nursery schools organise Christmas festivals, when children, parents and guests are beautifully dressed and celebrate the coming holiday. There is also a competition for the most beautifully decorated classroom.

For forty days before Christmas, the Romanian Orthodox Christians follow a time of Advent, which ends on Christmas Eve after the Mass.

The slaughter of the pig on the day of Ignatius (December 20th) is an important moment to anticipate Christmas. The preparation of different dishes achieves the dimensions of an old ritual, represented by sausages, *toba* (pigs' trotters), *sarmale* (blood pudding), the famous *cozonac* (a special cake), all kinds of cookies specific for each part of the country and, last but not least, the red wine and strong drinks, *tuica*, *horinca* and *palinca*.

The Christmas tree is set up in almost every home, but also in the centre of every village, town or city. It is beautifully decorated and lit up. The presents are placed on or under the Christmas tree and they are beautifully wrapped in coloured paper. Father Christmas comes to festivals, usually organised at nursery schools and schools, and brings nice presents to all the children after listening to their poems, carols and role-plays they perform. But he also comes on Christmas Eve to the children's own homes with some other gifts, and children take that opportunity to promise him they will be better and they will behave themselves. Presents are given within the family and to friends, too. Children get not only sweets and toys, but also clothes and books to read.

On Christmas Eve and on December 25th, there are reunions with the family. On the following days, Romanians also celebrate with their friends. *CRACIUN FERICIT!*

## Lesson Plan on Recycling and Saving Energy

**Target age:** 12 +

**Aims:** To improve students' knowledge of recycling and saving energy, to improve students' ability to organize notes and ideas into meaningful information, to improve students' ability to work in groups in a cooperative way, to improve students' ability to make short presentations using original texts

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Lesson outline:**

*L1, Step 1:* Students are divided into five groups (a paper and plastic team, a glass and cans team, a hazardous waste team, a hazardous chemical waste team and an energy-saving team). They are directed to some materials (original texts) on the internet about recycling and saving energy (see section on 'Resources' below). Then, they are asked several questions related to the topic. They have to give reasons for recycling as well as some consequences not recycling would have. Some pictures of such benefits and consequences posted around the room can serve as inspiration. (*20 minutes*)

*L1, Step 2:* Using English-English dictionaries and the information they have just gathered, students are asked to define the following concepts: (*10 min.*)

Group I - waste, recycling, the three Rs, environmental pollution

Group II - environment-friendly, composting process, biodegradable waste

Group III - hazardous waste, transfer station, drop-off centre

Group IV - hazardous chemical waste, recycling symbols

Group V - renewable energy, greenhouse effect

*L1, Step 3:* Students are asked to create an attractive slogan and logo related to the topic of their group. (*10 min.*)

*L1, Step 4:* Students are asked to create a mascot made out of recycled materials (aluminum cans, plastic bottles, paper, etc. can be supplied by the teacher). Each group gives its mascot a name. (*10 min.*)

*L1, Production* ('cosybambam'): Students create a short PowerPoint presentation incorporating all the information gathered.

**Motivation:** The lesson utilizes a current topic, such as waste recycling, and thus fulfils two goals: learning the target language and developing students' knowledge about environmental protection. The main approach is focused on cooperation, between students themselves as well as between students and the teacher. A hard-working and thoughtful classroom can also improve students' knowledge of environmental terms and concepts; recycling procedures; the most serious environmental and/or recycling problems their school currently faces; and their ability to offer possible solutions to these problems, use the Internet and other digital resources, create digital material and improve their ability to present high-quality information.

**Resources:** Internet pages, multimedia resources (PowerPoint presentations, movies, etc.), board messages, pictures printed from the Internet, authentic texts, cardboard and recycled materials for the follow-up posters and mascots. Online resources were provided to the students by group. The following Web sites may be of use:

Group 1 - Paper and Plastic Team:

<http://www.epa.gov/garbage/reduce.htm>

<http://www.recyclingconsortium.org.uk/secondary/info/defin.htm>

Group 2 - Cans, Glass and Biodegradable Products Team

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/kidspage/alum.html>

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/energyfacts/saving/index.html>

<http://www.need.org/needpdf/Museum%20of%20Solid%20Waste%20&%20Energy.pdf>

Group 3 - Hazardous Waste Team

<http://www.deq.state.va.us/kids/library/hazwaste.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/recyclecity/wrecker.htm#top>

Group 4 - Hazardous Chemical Waste Team

[http://www.tampagov.net/dept\\_Solid\\_Waste/information\\_resources/for\\_residents/household\\_hazardous\\_waste\\_identification.asp](http://www.tampagov.net/dept_Solid_Waste/information_resources/for_residents/household_hazardous_waste_identification.asp)

[http://cfpub.epa.gov/schools/top\\_sub.cfm?t\\_id=41&s\\_id=26](http://cfpub.epa.gov/schools/top_sub.cfm?t_id=41&s_id=26)

Group 5 - Energy Saving Team

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/difference.html>

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/kids/>

**Evaluation/Assessment:** At the end of the lesson, the teachers asked the students to create a short PowerPoint presentation, slogans and posters incorporating all the information learned. The presentations are to reflect students' new vocabulary and language structures and their perspective on environment protection. Students may also create posters after their presentations.

**Language:** EN

**BSI Elements Used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively classroom atmosphere), texts (producing oral and written narratives), reflection files

*Aurelia Nicolae*

English teacher, "Radu cel Mare" School, Gaesti

### Lesson Plan: 'Snapshot of My Life'

**Target age:** 11-12

**Aims:** To encourage the use of comparison and contrast in communication, to develop students' writing ability, to improve students' skills in editorial design, to raise students' level of cultural awareness

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher asks students to look at the topic pictures 'Snapshot of My Life' and at the headings that accompany them. Then they are asked a few questions related to the topics depicted. They each read a paragraph in turn as the teacher checks their comprehension. In this way, the teacher and students are talking about pictures, reading about British life, and comparing and contrasting them to their own ways of life. (*15 minutes*)

**L1, Step 2:** The teacher explains how to make a similar project in class and at home, following the necessary steps: making lists of things to be included, writing the text individually and then comparing their work to that of their peers. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** Students can use suggestive pictures, photos, stickers, maps and drawings to create nice projects based on set patterns. The final versions are presented orally to the class and can be displayed around the classroom. (*15 min.*)

**L1, Step 4:** The teacher checks and marks students' projects. (*5 min.*)

**Motivation:** Cultural awareness is a main focus in teaching English (or any foreign language). The teacher should create an enthusiastic atmosphere that the students can enjoy. They use their imagination and write in English about a snapshot of their life. The main focus is on cooperation among students and between students and the teacher to create a hard-working and thoughtful classroom. At the same time, this activity can be aimed at improving students' knowledge of editorial design (making an article look interesting).

**Resources:** Pictures, drawings, task sheets, coloured pencils, glue

**Evaluation/Assessment:** At the end of the lesson, the teacher asks students to create a project about their life; they present it orally to the class and their posters can be displayed around the classroom. The poster is checked and marked on a scale from 1 to 10.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a wonderful atmosphere, using pictures, assuming real identities in a meaningful learning context)

*Luminița Bărboi*

English teacher, Dragomirești School, Dragomirești

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### Lesson Plan on 'The Trouble Fish'

**Target age:** 10-11

**Aims:** To develop students' reading ability and empathy while reading, to encourage communication by telling stories or narrating past incidents, to practise the simple past of regular verbs ('walked', 'shouted', 'landed', etc.)

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher draws only the tail of a fish and plays a guessing game to elicit the word 'fish' from students. Students draw the rest of the fish in their own notebooks. (*3 minutes*)

**L1, Step 2:** Using the page from the textbook (see 'reading material' below), the teacher reads the instructions '*Look, read and write*' and explains the task. (*2 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** The teacher reads the text, one sentence at a time, and waits for the students to identify the missing words. (*3 min.*)

**L1, Step 4:** Students are allowed some time to read the text silently and to complete it (boat, fish, hat, laughed). (*2 min.*)

**L1, Step 5:** The students' answers are checked and individual students read aloud from the text. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 6:** The class votes on the most suitable title for the story (for instance, '*The Trouble Fish*'). (*3 min.*)

**L1, Step 7:** The teacher asks the students to respond to several comprehension questions ('*Where did the story take place?*' etc.). (*3 min.*)

**L1, Step 8:** Students are asked to underline the verbs in the simple past in the text. (*2 min.*)

**L1, Step 9:** Students are asked to illustrate as many words as they can using clumsy pictures; the student with the largest number of pictures in the story is declared the 'best fisherman' and is awarded a big fish made of cardboard from his fellow students. (*3 min.*)

**L1, Step 10** (Extension): To develop writing skills, the teacher asks the students to replace some words in the story while maintaining a meaningful context throughout. An example might be: '*My name is Kami-Lu and I come from China; let me tell you a story about a Panda...*'. Students can describe funny or fantastic incidents in teams or groups; stories can range from '*A Sweet Kitten*' or '*The Scary Dragon*' to '*The Cruel Octopus*' and so on. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 11:** Students make a poster with their picture-prompted story and display it in

their classroom. (5 min.)

**L1, Step 12:** The teacher provides a musical rhythm on the tape corresponding to the story setting while students sing a song about the animal kingdom. (2 min.)

**Motivation:** To cultivate positive attitudes about the need to protect endangered animals, the importance of pets in family life or the right of animals to live in their habitat.

**Resources:** Blackboard, task sheets, posters, pictures, crayons, textbook and audio materials

For reading material, see: *Set Sail! 4, Pupil's Book* by Jenny Dooley and Virginia Evans (Express Publishing, 2006: p.67)

**Evaluation/Assessment tip:** The teacher writes the number of students' mistakes on their personal 'error cards' and encourages the students to go 'hunting' for them. This is an excellent way to revise the content of students' outcomes and to let them become aware of their flaws.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a nice atmosphere and assuming a new identity to undergo a strange or funny experience, using a musical background), clumsy pictures

*Camelia Vasilescu*

English teacher, School No. 1, Moreni

### Lesson Plan on 'Mickey, Millie and Mut'

**Target age:** 11-12

**Aims:** to develop students' reading ability, to encourage creativity in communication, to act out a story

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher tells the students that two characters from the students' textbook, the children Mickey and Millie, have got a serious problem. (*3 minutes*)

**L1, Step 2:** Students skim the cartoon, identifying the characters' need for money in order to buy a pair of football boots and a new dress and discovering the unexpected solution that eventually proves to be a failure. Mickey is the new 'gorilla' at the zoo and his sister is the new 'lion', but they each get scared and run away. (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** Students are asked to put the sentences of the story summary in the correct order. (*5 min.*)

**L1, Step 4:** Students read the text and form three groups to act the dialogue. (Each group decides on the best person for each role: Mickey, his sister, their mother, the visitor, the zookeeper.) (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 5:** The groups perform the dialogue in front of the class dressed in specific costumes, using paper masks and wigs for the animal characters. (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 6:** The audience (i.e., the rest of the students) enjoy the performance and award the title of 'best actors' to one group. (*2 min.*)

**Motivation:** To increase students' self-confidence and involvement by using drama

**Resources:** pictures, dialogues, colourful costumes and clothes. For reading material, see: 'Mickey, Millie and Mut' from *Project English 1* by Tom Hutchinson (Oxford University Press, 1996: p. 66)

**Evaluation/Assessment:** Best artists are given diplomas, high marks and the chance to perform together as a team in the school festival.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating an exciting atmosphere, use of pictures), dramatization (assuming new identities for the parts performed, using colourful costumes and clothes)

*Camelia Vasilescu*

English teacher, School No. 1, Moreni

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## ACTIVITIES FROM BSI CLASSROOMS - ITALY

### Lesson Plan on Jobs

**Target age:** 14

**Level:** A2

**Aims:** Revising and learning new vocabulary, practising simple everyday language, improving listening, pronunciation and fluency

**Time frame:** 5 hours in class and 1 hour in the computer laboratory

#### **Lesson outline**

**L1, Warm-up:** The teacher introduces the lesson by showing slides containing words referring to jobs.

**L1, Step 1:** Students act out mini-dialogues, pretending to be doctors, nurses, etc. (For instance: ‘Good morning, my name’s ...., what’s your name?’ ‘I’m ... . What do you do Mr ...? What’s your job?’ ‘I’m a ... .’ ‘Ah, interesting! Let me introduce you to Mr ...; he’s a ... .’)

**L1, Step 2:** The teacher refers to workplaces and adds more new vocabulary, such as ‘timetables’, ‘shifts’, ‘formal environment’, ‘informal atmosphere’, and so on. Students act out short dialogues adding the new expressions (For instance: ‘Where do you work?’ ‘I work for..../I work at ... ./I work in ... .’ ‘What is it like?’ ‘It’s ...’ ‘Do you have shifts?’ ‘Yes I do/No I don’t.’)

**L2, Warm-up:** The teacher elicits names of several jobs.

**L2, Step 1:** Listening activity: Students listen and answer questions, then listen and repeat the dialogue to memorize the expressions. Finally, they act out job interviews themselves, changing names and jobs.

**L2. Step 2:** The teacher distinguishes between full-time and part-time jobs, then asks the students, ‘Have you got a part-time job in the summer?’ The teacher elicits various part-time jobs, miming them if necessary.

**L2, Step3:** Students perform mini-dialogues.

**L3. Warm-up:** The teacher quickly reviews the vocabulary.

**L3, Step 1** (Listening): Two students listen and answer the questions.

**L3, Step 2** (Game): Students receive a prepared worksheet with jobs and work places, which they have to link.

**L3, Step 3:** Students classify the jobs on the worksheet as either pleasant or unpleasant

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and explain why.

**L3, Homework:** Students choose one of the following two tasks: (1) Describe your favourite job, (2) Write a letter starting: ‘*Hi! I want to tell you about my new job...*’

**L4, Step 1:** Students talk about aspects of personality with the help of personality tests, grids and drawings.

**L4. Step 2 (Guessing game):** Students describe themselves or a friend and the others have to guess identities.

**L4, Step 3 (Discussion):** ‘*What about you? What type of person are you? What job is more suitable for you?*’

**L5, Warm-up** (Reading): Students read the advertisements and the descriptions of the people and link them with an arrow.

**L5, Step 1 (Listening):** The teacher goes over some of the words that students are going to hear. The students complete a listening exercise which deals with a particular job.

**L5, Step 2:** Students listen and answer questions

**L6, Production:** Students write their CV in the European format, using computers to organise their CV.

**Motivation:** A relaxed atmosphere in class is ensured by cooperative work and games. Students’ attention is heightened by the use of pictures and drawings. Students’ confidence is encouraged by chance to express their opinions and to talk about themselves.

**Resources:** Pictures, worksheets, tape recorder and computers

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The teacher asks for students’ opinion on the activities. Students’ confidence is increased because of the activities’ connections to real-life elements (jobs and CVs).

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a relaxed atmosphere, working in groups), dramatization (role playing)

*(The activities and the images for this lesson plan are included on pp. 110-111)*

**Giulia Santoro**

ITIS C.E. Gadda, Naples

### Lesson on ‘A Famous Festival in the UK’

**Target age:** 15 (level: A2)

**Aims:** To learn the geography and culture of a foreign country, to improve phonetics, to practice the four abilities, to learn to use a monolingual dictionary, to practise some daily functions (planning a festival and inviting guests)

**Time frame:** 3 hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up** (Brainstorming): The teacher prompts students to think about a famous festival and tell their neighbor (class partner) about it. (**5 minutes**)

**L1, Step 1:** Students are asked to pretend they are students in a foreign country and then to choose a place in the UK where they would like to be for a famous festival. Students research the place they have chosen and a festival that takes place there. (**15 min.**)

**L1, Step 2:** Students prepare a map of the UK with all the chosen locations, including indications of the festivals taking place there and the phonetic transcriptions of the place and festival names. (**20 min.**)

**L1, Step 3:** Each student speaks briefly about the festival chosen. (**20 min.**)

**L2, Step 1:** Working in pairs, students organize a journey to take part in their festivals. (**20 min.**)

**L2, Step 2:** Each student writes a letter to a friend with the following prompt: ‘You are on holiday in a British town. Write a letter to an English friend, describe the town where you are and the festival. Invite your friend to join you. Prepare a plan to enjoy the holiday together’. (One student’s response is included in the supplemental materials below.) (**20 min.**)

**L2, Step 3:** Dramatization ‘At the festival!’ Students work in groups to prepare a dramatization of the festivities. They work while listening to songs of famous British singers. (**20 min.**)

**L3, Step 1:** Students act out the festival dramatization they prepared in the previous lesson. (**30 min.**)

**L3, Step 2** (Homework): Students write about the events experienced at the festival in their incredible journals. (**30 min.**)

**Motivation:** Cooperation is stimulated by the kind of task given and enthusiasm is obtained thanks to the nature of the activities themselves. The teacher acts mainly as a

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facilitator, making students feel responsible for their work.

**Resources:** Map of Great Britain, the Internet, pictures, music samples

**Evaluation:** Students' linguistic competence and communicative competence is checked through written work and dramatization.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creativity, wonderful atmosphere with background music, adopting identities), text production, dramatization (role-playing and acting)

*Eva de Vico*

Liceo Scientifico Giambattista Vico, Napoli

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*Sample work:*

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Dear Frankie,

How are you? I hope you passed the test to get the driving licence. I'm fine. Now I'm on holiday in the Isle of Wight for the Music Festival. It takes place annually on the island. It was originally held from 1968 to 1970 near Godshill and was by far the biggest and most famous of these early festivals. Bob Dylan, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Leonard Cohen were some of the performers. The event was revived in 2002 at Seaclose Park near Newport. This year there will be David Bowie, too. I cannot miss it! Would you come with me? It will be great! The Isle of Wight is also a nice island and it's just three miles from the South coast of Great Britain. It's not too far from you and you can also take your new car! The festival will finish on the 1st of August, then we could take a ferry to go to England and perhaps, with your car, we could go to London. I'm sure we will enjoy ourselves. I look forward to hearing you... and remember you can't refuse my invitation!

With so much love, Giulia

## Lesson Plan on Inventing Stories

**Target age:** 16

**Level:** Lower intermediate

**Aims:** To practice the four abilities, to encourage cooperation and expression of personal opinions

**Time frame:** 2 hours (Plus some time at home for incredible journals)

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** The class is divided into small groups (three or four students at the most). They are told they are going to do something relaxing. All they have to do is use their imagination to invent a story together. The teacher starts the story using the usual 'Once upon a time...' The students continue the story in whatever way they want (even if it is a bit crazy!).

**L1, Step 2:** In turn, a representative from each group gets up and writes a sentence on the board.

**L1, Step 3:** After all the groups have written at least a sentence and there is no free space left on the blackboard, a group is asked to volunteer to act out the most important events from the story the class has just invented.

**L1, Step 4:** At the end of the dramatization, the students are asked to comment on the activity, using the following prompts: (1) aim of activity, (2) what I learnt, (3) what I enjoyed, (4) what to improve.

**L2, Step 1:** The teacher and students choose some images from an Internet search engine (such as images.google.com) to illustrate the story they wrote in the previous lesson (the image of a stray dog, an unconscious woman, a sailor, a policeman, a Power Ranger, etc.).

**L2, Step 2 (Production):** At home, the students re-write the story in their incredible journals, using the images as a reminder.

**Motivation:** The students use their imagination and use the language freely without the teacher interfering in their work. The teacher gives guidance when asked but his or her main task is to encourage free and creative language use.

**Resources:** Blackboard, computers

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment takes into consideration the process and the outcomes. Students are asked to state what they liked and what they disliked about the activities.

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**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively atmosphere), dramatization (telling stories, acting), incredible journals

**Eva de Vico**

Liceo Scientifico Giambattista Vico, Napoli

**Sample work:**

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The following is the story the students from one of my classes invented, followed by some of their comments:

*Once upon a time there was a woman but unfortunately one day she fainted in a street because she was a drug addict. A dog found her and tried to help her because he realized that she wasn't dead but she was going to die. The dog called a sailor who said, 'What a nice girl'. But near the girl there was a drug dealer. The sailor called a policeman by mobile phone. The drug dealer hit the sailor. The policeman arrived and a shoot out started. The drug dealer died in the shoot out. The sailor took the woman to hospital and they fell in love.. The sailor was an alien and had superpowers. He had arrived to conquer the world but he became good because he was in love. So his brother arrived and started a fight. The sailor called the Power Rangers to help him and the sailor's evil brother called the Dark Sailor Moon.*

*The story ends with the sailor winning the fight.*

1) This activity improves dialogue and interaction in English. 2) I learnt some new words. 3) I enjoyed inventing a crazy story. 4) Interaction in English.

1) I think that the aim of this activity is to involve everyone and to enjoy learning English. 2) I learnt new words and I learnt to share with all the students and their opinions. 3) I enjoyed the acting. 4) I think we must improve the English conversation.

1) The aim is to learn to speak English. 2) I learnt to improvise a scene in English. 3) I enjoyed the funny and different way to have a lesson. 4) I would improve the story.

1) In my opinion the aim of the activity is to create a relationship among us. It helps us to speak English but having fun. 2) Creating a text and playing it all together is a terrific activity. 3) I enjoyed the cooperation. 4) We must improve attention and participation.

### Lesson on 'Meeting Well-Known People and Talking to Them'

**Target age:** 15-16

**Aims:** To become familiar with literary characters, to encourage text production by practising the four skills of language learning, to foster imagination

**Level:** A2

**Time frame:** About two hours in class plus time at home for reading. (The students in the second form of high school were asked to read some simplified classics during their summer holiday.)

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** Students play a game, guessing characters based on clues and questions given by the teacher (i.e., '*He lived in an isolated castle. Who is he?*') (**10 minutes**)

**L1, Step 1:** The students who have read the same book form groups. One plays a character from the book and the others interview him. (**25 min.**)

**L1, Step 2:** Each group performs the interview to the class. (**30 min.**)

**L1, Step 3:** The class chooses the best interview. (**5 min.**)

**L2, Step 1** (Production): At home, the students write a page in their diary about the experience in school, either pretending to be the character whose role they played or one of the interviewers.

**L2, Step 2:** In class, the teacher gives students photocopies of the pages, the students read and vote on the one they like best. (**20 min.**)

**Motivation:** The approach is focused on cooperation and the development of creativity. The teacher acts as a facilitator and ensures that work proceeds smoothly.

**Resources:** Books, photocopies

**Evaluation:** The class is actively involved in evaluating work, as they have to judge the work by choosing the 'best actors' and the 'best diary'.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, text decoding and production, dramatization

**Eva de Vico**

Liceo Scientifico Giambattista Vico, Napoli

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Sample work:

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### Interviewing Hamlet

- 1.What was your reaction when you saw your father's ghost?
- 2.What did you feel when your mother married again?
- 3.What did you feel for Ophelia?
- 4.Do you think it is more courageous to live or to die?
- 5.How did you feel when you killed Polonius?
- 6.What is death in your opinion?
- 7.Do you like Elsinore Castle?

### Count Dracula's Diary

*Dear Diary,*

*Today I had to go to a school in Naples, called Giambattista Vico, where some students met two famous characters of British Horror literature. I saw and met Dr Victor Frankenstein, who gave us some information about his private life, for example, he spoke about how much he loved his creation, the monster. Although I am a ghost of the famous Vlad Dracula, count of Transylvania, all the boys and girls were not scared by my presence and asked me questions about my life and how I became a vampire. It is sad to think that I can scare no one any more, especially now that I am a wandering soul. If I was still the vampire of times ago, I could taste the good blood of these guys. I'd gratify my eternal thirst. I still remember the sweet taste of the blood of my victims....but today, the life of a ghost is so boring. I can do nothing interesting.*

*The sun is going down and don't want to miss the fantastic view of the moon so I'll enjoy this night.*

*Count Dracula*

### Lesson on Talking about Unusual Houses

**Target age:** 12 (level: beginners)

**Aims:** To understand cultural differences, to reinforce and broaden vocabulary, to improve speaking and listening skills

**Time frame:** 4 hours, including correction and evaluation

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Step 1:** Students listen to the song 'Yellow Submarine' twice. ([10 minutes](#))

**L1, Step 2:** Students are given a handout, on which some of the words are missing. They listen to the song twice more, trying to fill in the blanks as they listen the second time.

The 'weakest' students can be given the words in a scrambled order (*yellow, man, submarine, life, friends, green, blue, live, door, play*).

*In the town where I was born  
Lived a ... who sailed the sea  
And he told us of his ....  
In a ..... submarine.  
So we sailed on to the sun  
Till we found the sea of ....  
And we lived beneath the waves  
In our yellow .....  
We all .... in a yellow submarine  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine  
We all live in a yellow submarine  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine.  
And our ..... Are all aboard  
Many more of them live next ....  
And the band begins to ....  
We all live in a yellow submarine  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine  
We all live in a yellow submarine  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine.  
As we live a life of ease,  
Everyone of us has all we need,  
Sky of .... And sea of green,  
In our yellow submarine.  
We all live in a yellow submarine  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine,  
We all live in a yellow submarine,  
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine.*

*L1, Step 3:* The teacher helps students check whether they were right, and they all sing together. (35 min.)

*L2, Warm-up:* Students sing all together again. (5 min.)

*L2, Step 1:* The teacher writes the names of some unusual houses on the blackboard (house-boat, igloo, hut, tepee) and helps students describe them briefly with the help of pictures. The class can discuss the location, materials and inhabitants of these houses. (20 min.)

*L2, Step 2:* The teacher gives students some words in a scrambled order (Europe, Africa, Alaska, USA; River, Jungle, Indian Reservation; Ice, Bearskin, Straw, Wood; Indians, Eskimo, Europeans, Africans) and tells them to connect these words with the different houses. (10 min.)

*L2, Step 3:* Students are asked to describe other unusual houses, and the teacher helps them using gestures and pictures. Students can work in groups on this activity. (25 min.)

*L3, Production:* Each student can describe her or his ideal house, including its location, size, number of floors, materials, features (football pitch, theatre, swimming pool, fitness room, etc.) and all the strange qualities they can imagine. They can write their description using clumsy pictures. (30 min.)

**Motivation:** The activity is focused on the process and the outcomes. The lessons involve students in individual and group work; the teacher acts as a participant, a leader and a facilitator.

**Resources:** Tapes, tape recorder, the Internet, pictures, blackboard.

For song, see the following website:

<http://www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/Yellow-Submarine-lyrics-The-Beatles>

**Evaluation:** The assessment takes into consideration the process and the outcomes. Students are asked to state what they liked and what they disliked about the activities.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, use of text, clumsy pictures

*Paola D'Aiello Caracciolo*

Istituto Comprensivo Statale Maiuri, Naples

### Lesson on 'The Story of a Hungry Little Mouse'

**Target age:** 11

**Aim:** To develop creative skills and imagination by telling stories and miming

**Time frame:** 4 hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** Tell the class they are going to hear the story of a mouse. Ask if any of them have a mouse as a pet, where mice live, what do they eat and similar questions. (**5 minutes**)

**L1, Step 1:** Using flashcards or drawings, the teacher pre-teaches the vocabulary from the story. The teacher uses gestures or mimes to help remember the word, encouraging the children to imitate the teacher. (**10 min.**)

**L1, Step 2:** The teacher quickly flashes the cards with the words, asking students to shout out the word displayed. Then, the teacher presents cards with just the first letter of each word. The teacher asks students to guess the word using the initial letter. (**15 min.**)

**L1, Step 3:** The teacher uses gestures and enthusiasm to tell the story of the mouse. Students are asked to imitate the teacher's gestures as they hear the story. This process may be repeated as many times as necessary. (**30 min.**)

**L2, Warm-up:** The teacher tells the story again, without carrying out the movements, but asks the students to perform the gestures to demonstrate their comprehension. (**15 min.**)

**L2, Step 1:** The teacher hands out a picture worksheet to each student and reads the sentences out in a jumbled order. Students are asked to number the pictures. (**20 min.**)

**L2, Step 2:** The teacher checks the order by asking students. (**10 min.**)

**L3, Step 1:** The teacher writes the story in skeleton form and helps students reproduce the story text. (**30 min.**)

**L3, Step 2:** Students write the story in their reflection file. (**30 min.**)

**Motivation:** Students learn both to work individually and in collaboration with the teacher and to order sequences. The teacher constantly acts as a leader.

**Resources:** Photocopies, worksheets

For reading material and images, see: *Do and Understand* by Gunter Gerngross and Herbert Puchta (Longman, 1996)

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment is based on the process. Success is checked on the basis of students' feedback.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively class atmosphere, miming), dramatization (telling stories), reflection files

*Silvana Mone*

Scuola Media Statale Silio Italico, Naples

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## Lesson Plan on Turkish Weddings

**Target age:** 16

**Aims:** To get to know different cultures, to integrate the four skills of language learning

**Time frame:** 2 academic hours

**Lesson outline:**

**L1, Warm-up:** The teacher shows students some pictures on a screen, saying something like, '*A friend of mine has just sent me some pictures. She is not Italian. Can you guess where these people live? What are these pictures about? Do all the pictures refer to the same event?*' If students cannot guess, they can be told the answers. (10 minutes)

**L1, Step 1:** The teacher asks students to brainstorm all the words that come to their minds when they think about a wedding (presents, church, dinner, rice, photos, priest, music, party, rings, nice clothes, etc.). During this process, the teacher introduces key words such as 'bride', 'groom' and 'best man' if the students do not know them. Then, the teacher asks students to concentrate on the various actions involved in a wedding ceremony and write their own suggestions on the board. (For instance: '*The girl's father takes her to the altar, the groom waits for her near the altar, the church is full of flowers, at the end of the ceremony guests and relatives throw rice at the couple, there is a big party,*' etc.) (30 min.)

**L1, Step 2:** Students are asked to read an article (see below) in order to compare their ideas about an 'ideal wedding' with what the article says. In particular, they should figure out what is similar, what is different and what is not mentioned at all in the text. (There are some major differences. Just to mention two of them: The Turkish ceremony is not a religious one, while in Italy 90 percent of people, even those who never go to church, marry in church. In Italy, purity is symbolized by the bride's veil and white dress, while in Turkey it is a ribbon.) Students read the text and complete the task working with their peers. Answers are then checked. (40 min.)

**L1, Step 3 (Homework):** Students are given the following writing task: 'This year there is a Turkish girl in your class. She has shown you some pictures about her sister's wedding. Tell your diary what you discovered about weddings in Turkey.' (40 min.)

**Motivation:** The approach to this lesson is based on cooperation among students and

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between students and the teacher; the teacher acts as a facilitator trying to keep the atmosphere relaxed and lively.

**Resources:** CD with pictures, blackboard

**Evaluation:** Students may be asked to write an anonymous short opinion of the lesson and of their behaviour during the activities.

**Language:** EN

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (cultural awareness), text production, incredible journals

*Marina Villone*

Liceo Labriola, Naples

*Reading material:*

### Turkish Weddings

When a couple decides to marry, the son's family meets the daughter's family to get permission for the couple to marry. If the daughter's family accepts this wedding, the couple and their families decide the date of the wedding ceremony together. The bride's family buys some gifts and furniture for their son-in-law, and the groom's family buys some gifts and furniture for their daughter-in-law before the wedding ceremony.

Both the bride's family and the groom's family invite their relatives to the wedding ceremony, which is held in a hotel ballroom at dinner time. Before the wedding ceremony, the bride's father ties a red ribbon around the bride's waist three times, reciting verses from the *Quran* (the sacred book of Muslims). The ribbon is a symbol of her purity. Then, the bride and the groom are presented to each other. The groom will give the bride a gift and the families will carry on with their wedding festivities.

At the beginning of the ceremony, when the couple enters the ceremony hall, the wedding march is played.

The bride and groom sit together at the table. Their best men and best maids sit on their right side, and a government officer who does the wedding paperwork sits on the left side of the couple. The government officer talks about the wedding and asks both the couple and their witnesses some questions about the wedding. Finally, they all sign the wedding certificate and the government officer announces that the couple is officially married.

And then, the bride and groom kiss each other and dance their first dance. After that, their relatives offer them some gifts. At the end of the ceremony, the wedding cake is cut by the bride and groom and pictures are taken of the relatives as a group. Then, the newly married couple spends their first night in that hotel. The next day, they go on a honeymoon trip.



*Preparing for a Turkish wedding*

**Zuhal Yılmaz Doğan**

## ACTIVITIES FROM BSI CLASSROOMS - BULGARIA

### Lesson Plan on Storytelling

**Target age:** 12 +

**Aims:** To encourage text production (written and oral), to make use of students' fantasy and imagination for boosting creativity and to develop skills for describing characters and settings and for weaving narratives and dialogues

**Time frame:** 2 academic hours

**Lesson outline:**

The lesson is based on Vladimir Propp's work on folktale morphology as a series of characters and functions.

**L1, Warm-up:** Students are acquainted with or reminded of Propp's lists of typical characters (their structural function in building a story) and the series of actions (functions) they may take in a folktale. At this point students' understanding is being checked by asking them to provide examples of each/some of the character types/functions from folk tales they know (e.g., Jack from 'Jack and the Bean Stalk' is the 'hero', while the old man giving him the beans is the 'donor'). (*10 minutes*)

**L1, Step 1:** The actual involvement of students in creating a story starts by brainstorming the main characters. Students give their ideas of what their 'hero', 'villain', 'donor', 'magical helper(s)', 'anti-heroes' and 'testers' (putting the hero on trial) should be called. The activity ends by drawing a cobweb of the main characters on the board. Settings should also be figured out at this stage. (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 2:** The next step is to flesh out the characters by providing them with personal traits, looks, family background, etc. students are asked to work in pairs or in small groups. Using charts or other worksheets, the students compile characters' profiles, recycling the use of adjectives, collocations and other expressions for describing people and places. The closing phase of this activity is to compile a 'Bible of Characters' written on the board or flip-chart so it may be seen and agreed upon by everyone. (*The Bible of Characters* is a contemporary line-producing technique used in script-writing for TV serials.) (*10 min.*)

**L1, Step 3:** The first lesson ends by dividing the class into groups (the number of students in each group should not exceed eight). The teacher ensures that every group appoints a *chairperson* (responsible for the group work and that every student contributes to it), a *note-keeper* (putting the group's ideas on paper) and a *reporter/story-teller*.

In the break (if such is envisaged) the note-keepers should copy the 'Bible of Characters'

so that each group has its own copy to work from. (10 min.)

**L2, Warm-up:** The teacher sets the students in their appointed groups, sees if they are equipped with the ‘Bible of Characters’ and lists of functions (after Propp or adapted version) and energizes them by stating her or his expectation for wonderful stories. (10 min.)

**L2, Step 1:** The students are given twenty to twenty-five minutes to compile their stories. They may rehearse their stories if they complete writing before the time has elapsed. The teacher monitors the process, supervising that everybody sticks to their assigned jobs and keeps the time. (10 min.)

**L2, Step 2:** After the last group completes their story, students tell their stories ‘in public’. Depending on the length of the stories and the time left, the class listens to all stories. The students should be encouraged to have a positive response assisting the story-tellers by using appropriate exclamations, questions or echo phrases in the target foreign language. (10 min.)

**L2, Step 3:** The teacher praises the students for the stories they have produced and asks students to write them down as homework or make them into comic strips. As a follow-up a gallery of stories on a class poster, including individual work, may be elaborated to pay tribute to the best stories. (10 min.)

**Motivation:** The main approach is focused on cooperation between students themselves and between students and the teacher, who ensures a busily thinking and hard-working classroom aimed at the production of particular outputs (individual and group working process) and outcomes (groups’ and individuals’ stories). The teacher’s role is to facilitate the process, providing lively cooperative atmosphere based on respect for discipline and each students’ contribution to group work.

**Resources:** On Propp, teachers and students may read: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir\\_Propp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Propp) (in English), flipcharts, copies of lists with characters and functions for the groups, worksheets, cardboard for the follow-up posters with written or drawn stories

**Evaluation/Assessment:** The assessment is aimed at the process. At the end the teacher asks the students if they had fun during the lesson, what they liked most and what they did not quite like about the activities as they were structured. They might be stimulated to reflect over their (self-) organization during the cooperative stages, their strong and weak points as teams, etc. A simple questionnaire as an assessment tool may be applied

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm (creating a lively classroom atmosphere), use of texts (oral and written narratives), dramatization

*Svoboda Gagarova*

Department of Language Training and Students’ Sport at Medical Academy, Sofia

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### Lesson plan on Storytelling Using Gianni Rodari's 'Fantastic Binominal'

**Target age:** 10 - 18 (level A2 - B2)

**Aims:** Stimulating fantasy and imagination, developing speaking and writing skills (especially for description), encouraging text (oral or written) production, learning and re-using grammar

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour, plus time for preparation at home

**Lesson outline:**

*L1, Warm-up:* The teacher explains the aims of the lesson and the speaking and writing tasks.

*L1, Step 1:* The class chooses two team captains, who alternate selecting students to form to groups (teams).

*L1, Step 2:* The teacher tells teams to think of a word (a noun) and the captain of the team writes it on the board. Students write words which create a 'fantastic binominal' (e.g., bread - newspaper). (*10 minutes*)

*L1, Step 3:* Students are given twenty minutes to make a draft and take notes in their reflection files.

*L1, Step 4:* After their time is up, the captain tells the whole story again. (Optionally, a jury of students may decide which story is the best one).

*L1, Step 5* (Homework): Students are asked to write a story of their own, which maybe added to their incredible journals or reflection files.

**Motivation:** This approach helps students to use their imagination by creating a story combining two words that rarely go together, and by giving that story has unusual ending. The method helps students to develop both their writing and speaking skills, revise vocabulary and practice using their own sentences. The main approach is the cooperative method which develops the skills for description and characterization.

**Resources:** Books, videos, pictures, photos

**Assessment:** The lesson described above ensures students' enthusiasm in comprehending new information and mastering language skills. Students are assessed on their performance and participation.

**Language:** EN, RU (or any non-native language)

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, use of texts

*Iliana Blagoeva*

133 A.S. Pushkin High School, Sofia

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### Lesson Technique on Saving Accounts

**Target age:** 12 + (Level A2 +)

**Time frame:** 15 minutes or less (in any lesson)

A technique for innovatively ‘assessing’ knowledge over a long period of a teaching-learning partnership

**Aim:** To improve the ‘naturalness’ or ‘authenticity’ of the foreign language learned

*(Note: The technique is based on the necessity to build up considerable amount of ‘collocations’ or fixed phrases that are meaningful and easily picked up/understood within ‘natural’ (a native speakers’) language. The aim is to add ‘a nominative value’ to every expression mastered. The suggested nominative value is one EURO for every expression students use adequately or appropriately in any content/speech production assessed.)*

**Step 1:** At a point in the curriculum deemed appropriate by the teacher, he or she introduces the idea of the ‘savings accounts’. They ask the students to open their ‘savings account’ as a diary (a notebook) in which to enter every successful ‘combination’ of new phraseology, tense patterns, idiomatic expressions, etc. (‘success’ is determined by praise from foreign language teachers or knowledgeable peers). The entries should be inserted and monitored on a daily (or regular basis) so as to pay ‘interest rates’. The interest rates will be the length of time over which students maintain to use the ‘unusual’ (authentic) expressions.

**Step 2:** At the beginning of every lesson, students are encouraged to monitor their homework checks and their own (or other students’) oral presentations to register their progress as ‘money’ (points redeemed as ‘solid money’).

**Step 3:** Every month ‘the bank’ (the teacher) monitors the lists of adequately used, learned and mastered expressions. The teacher might choose to categorize them (e.g., as collective nouns, quantifiers, determiners, time expressions, conjunctions/linking words, phrasal verbs, collocations, idioms, etc.) After checking the ‘points’ (the times of registered appropriate use) the teacher might award ‘interest rates’—a rate by which to multiply the number of registered appropriate usages.

**Step 4:** The method can be used as an alternative (self/or group-based) assessment of progress. For the end, a poster table might be elaborated, presenting the results as rising/ falling indices at the ‘language stock exchange’.

**Motivation:** The approach is based on the idea of how to better visualize the ‘profit’ of proper/adequate knowledge. Nowadays students are better motivated by quantitatively redeeming their knowledge and skills in whatever way. The approach is extremely vivid, giving them the idea of ‘a value adding value to itself’.

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**Resources:** A notebook, many hours of monitoring written and oral speech production

**Evaluation:** This lesson technique is itself a kind of self- and peer evaluation method, added to the traditional method of progress assessment.

**Language:** EN or any non-native language

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, assessment (self and mutual assessment)

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Department of Language Training and Students' Sport at Medical Academy , Sofia

### Lesson Technique for Teaching Pronunciation: An A Cappella Choir and a Conductor

**Target age:** Young learners (Level: Beginners)

**Aim:** To introduce and encourage proper pronunciation

**Time frame:** 1 academic hour

**Warm-up:** The teacher introduces the idea that every language on earth has its own sounding based on specific sounds. The ‘sound system’ of the foreign language is illustrated by the teacher with the aid of poster or other appropriate visual aid and his/her own voice or a recording. After the initial illustration, the teacher drills the pronunciation several times with the whole class repeating in unison.

**Step 1:** The students are invited to draw ‘sounds’ (their phonetic symbols) from a pack prepared by the teacher. Students may be made ‘responsible’ for more than one sound. Students are arranged in a circle with the teacher inside, and are informed that they have to produce the sound when pointed. Students hold their cards with sounds in front of them so that everybody can see them.

**Step 2:** The teacher takes on the role of a ‘conductor’ to their choir/orchestra of students. By use of a baton s/he points to a card held by a student. The student utters it. It is quite necessary to stimulate the exaggeration in pronunciation so as to help students remember the peculiarities of the different sounds. For instance, the cards may read [æ] [ð] [θ] [tʃ] [ζ] etc. (if EN is foreign language). You may ask the other students to act as an echo, repeating the sound, or ask them to raise their voices and change the rhythm to heighten the fun.

**Step 3:** The teacher says that now they are going to play a real melody, though ‘abstract’, like saying in a very quick rhythm the sounds they have been exercising so far. Again s/he points at random sounds, like e.g. [u:] [i:] [p] [æ] [f] [t] [a:] etc. and the students should utter them in a quick succession, trying not to pause or prolonging their utterance until the next student joins. It should be fun and a lot of laughter, because they cannot do it for more than two to three minutes at a time.

**Step 4:** The teacher writes a pool of words and/or short sentences on the board. The students ‘read’ them using the same technique of successive pronunciation of ‘student-sounds’. In the case of [m] [ʌ] [ð] [θ] (‘mother’), for instance, four students will pronounce the sounds in sequence; in the case of [m] [ʌ] [ð] [θ]- [i] [z] - [æ] [t] - [h] [θu] [m] (‘mother is at home’), ten students will pronounce the sounds in sequence.

**Step 5:** The lesson ends with each student ‘reading’ the words and sentences from the board. The best pronunciations can be awarded by clapping hands or other praise.

**Resources:** A pack of cards with the phonetic symbols, using a particular colour for the different categories (e.g. red for the vowels, blue for the consonants and green for the diphthongs)

**Motivation:** As this technique is a kind of game based on cooperative work, students are stimulated to work together to produce a nice ‘result’—a melody (their mutually pronounced words/sentences). For young learners in particular, it is fun to play with everything, in this case with their voices.

**Evaluation:** The assessment of the activity takes place during the process. Students are praised for correct pronunciation and can learn and reinforce new pronunciations.

**Language:** EN (or any non-native language)

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, teaching pronunciation

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### Lesson Technique for Dramatization: Acting a ‘Thing’

**Target age:** Young learners (Level A1)

**Time frame:** 10-15 minutes

**Aim:** To stimulate students’ imagination and creativity, to reinforce vocabulary and grammar structures (asking questions), to practise descriptive skills in building characteristics, to develop oral (communicative) skills, to encourage the learning through body expression and mimicking

**Step 1:** At the beginning of the lesson, the class sits or stands in a circle. The teacher asks the students to choose an item connected to the category of nouns to be introduced, reinforced and learnt during the lesson. For example, if you teach fruit, ask the students to choose a fruit. The same can be applied to any topic and/or category of nouns (objects), e.g. animals, the life cycle (a baby, a teenager, an elderly), meals, furniture, a part of a building (a window, a door, a roof, etc.), vehicles and so on. After some time (approximately five minutes) provided for focusing on the item/object, the students have to ‘present’ the thing they have chosen with its foreign-language name and a short description of their own (what it looks like, what it can do, what purpose it has, etc.).

**Variant 1:** When appropriate, i.e., when the item (the object) is comparatively easy to render without saying a word, the students first mime ‘the thing’. For example, if the thing is ‘apple’, the student might mime biting a fruit ‘holding’ it in such a way as to show its round form. The class should guess, urged either by the question of the teacher (*‘What is it?’*) or of the students themselves (*‘What am I?’*). After the class comes up with the noun, the teacher continues encouraging the students to provide adjectives describing ‘the thing’.

**Variant 2:** The class is in a circle. Everyone has thought of a ‘thing’. One child is appointed to come into the centre of the circle to play the ‘target’ of class questions and to respond to them. No direct questions of the kind *‘What are you?’* are allowed. Only circumstantial questions are eligible like: *What is your colour? Are you edible/Can you be eaten? Are you a ‘dead’ thing or a living thing? Can you move? What can you do?* etc. The students has to guess ‘the thing’ using the answers they elicit.

**Motivation:** Young learners learn more by doing. Visualising and acting objects while being stimulated to give short answers to questions helps them boost their confidence in a real-time communicational situation. Moreover, they have fun while being involved in the exercise.

**Language:** EN (or any non-native language)

**BSI elements used:** Enthusiasm, teaching pronunciation, dramatization

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### Techniques for Out-of-Class Activities: Blog

The blog is a contemporary communicative form with a lot of applications. As it is fairly popular nowadays, it may intrigue the students and thus be successfully incorporated in the teaching/learning process.

#### What does 'Blog' mean?

A 'blog' refers to a private Web page which is published by either an individual or a group of individuals.

Blogs are commonly personal journals or diaries and are used to comment on all sorts of topics depending on the interests of the *blogger* (author).

A blog is usually updated frequently, maybe monthly, weekly or even daily, it all depends on the blogger.

Most blogs enable the visitors to post comments and/or suggestions allowing interactivity between the blogger and the visitors.

Source: <http://www.helpwithpcs.com/jargon/blog.htm>

We suggest trying out some interactive blog-activities rather than the more outdated 'private diaries' There are four major advantages to using a blog. First, readers can quickly determine *the chronological update and the scope of the publications*. The blog can be bound to curriculum topics and follow homework assignments or additional projects or outputs. Second, *the public character of the contents* requires that the authors reveal less personal or intimate details while focusing more on issues of general interest. The dual function of this 'public contemplation' is to protect the students who do not feel at ease to publicly share personal problems or circumstances (for specific age or cultural reasons) while at the same time to educate them on real language use in a constructive way. Furthermore, its *interactivity*—the option for posting a comment—makes the blog a group activity with the far-reaching consequences of getting students used to being actively involved in discussions. The teacher can take every opportunity arising from the blog discussion to teach the students the rules of civilized public debate. Finally, the complexity of the 'blog media' gives students the opportunity to *exercise various media-connected public roles* and their specific competences: an author, a reader, a commentator, an administrator (editor) and a moderator (the last two are particularly crucial for the 'real blog-sphere').

### **The blog format**

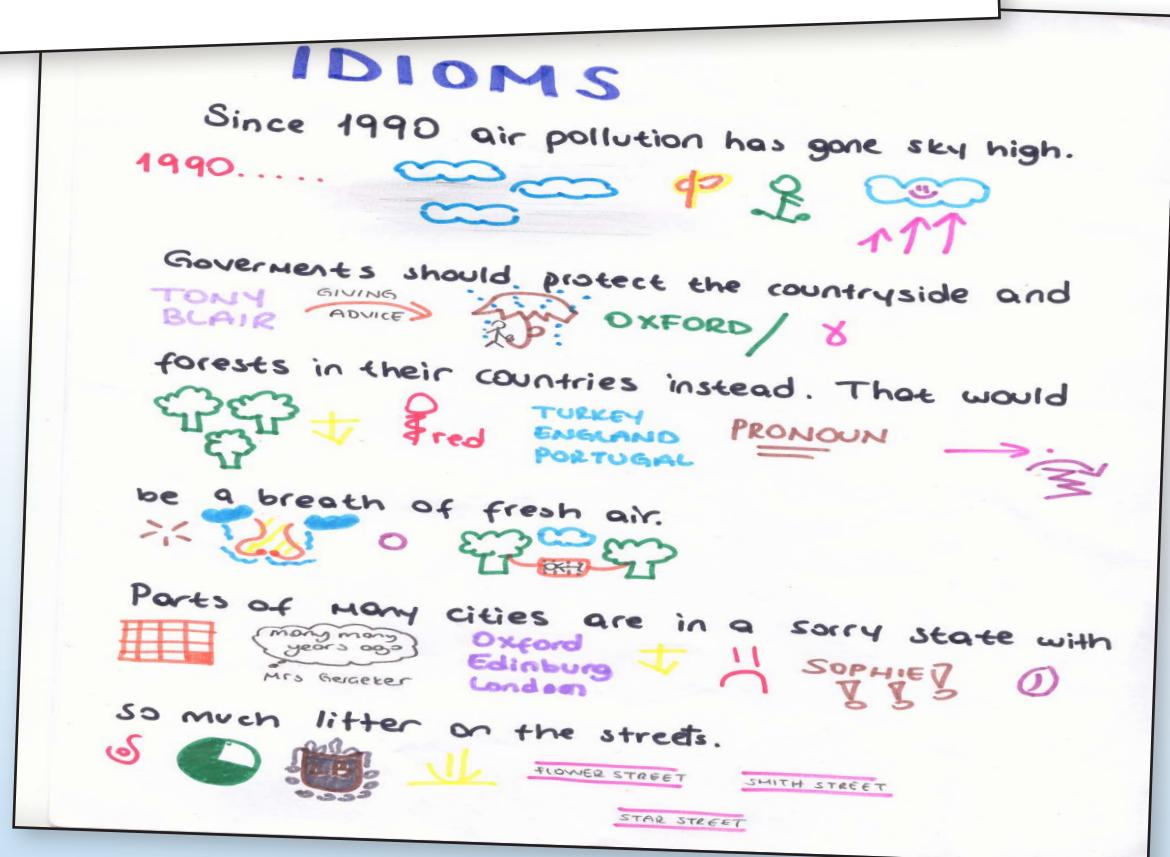
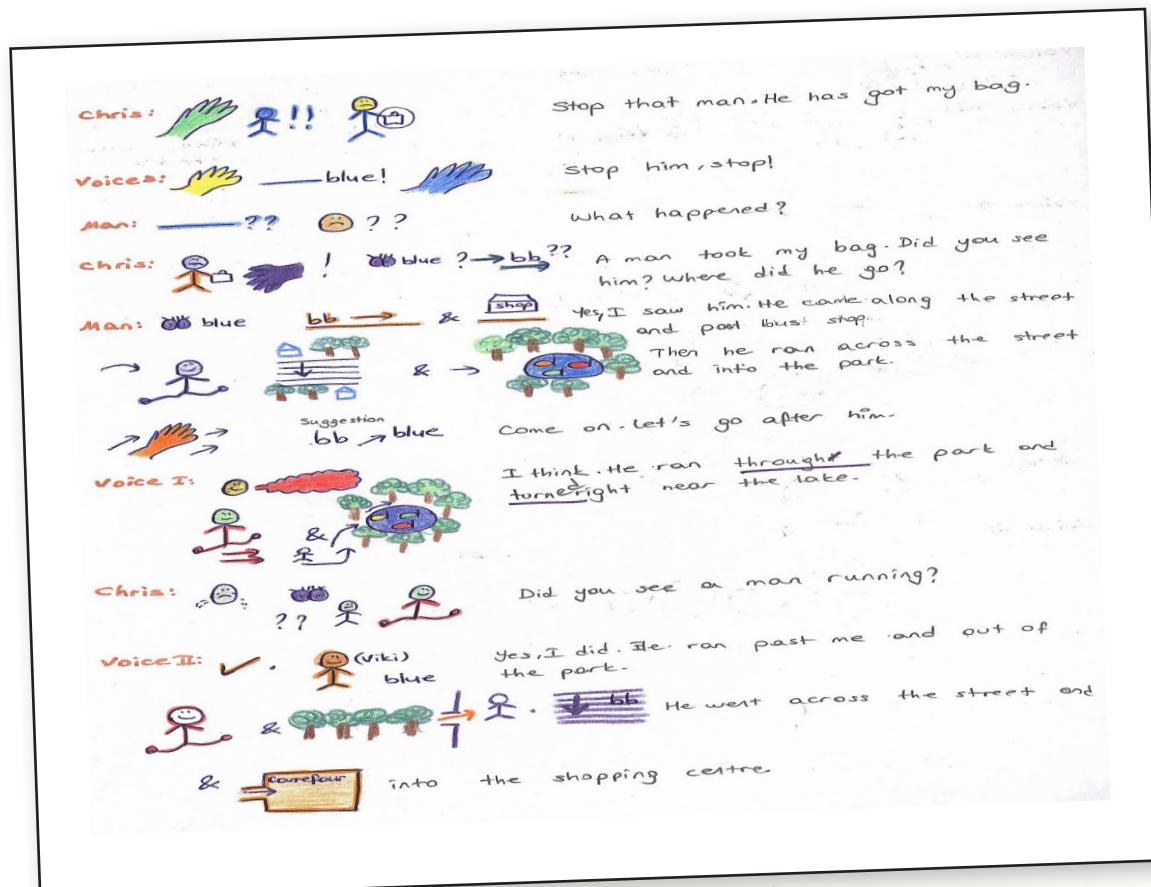
- 1) In an ideal situation, the blog is created on the Internet, especially if the school can provide the equipment for online classroom activities and the teacher has at least basic computer skills. Starting and maintaining a blog is a good example of teaching and active acquisition of integrated skills, both technology- and language-related.
- 2) If there is no opportunity to create an online blog, then it can take the form of a poster-blog, more like the usual 'wall newspapers' one can see in classrooms. For the purpose you need a flipchart notebook or a big cardboard sheet to initiate the blog space. If you take a flipchart notebook, you can use a separate sheet for each new topic, making sure to keep all the topics in their chronological order. (If you take a cardboard sheet, then you have to remove the 'old topics' in the update process or use a new sheet each time.) The post (for the date or the topic) takes the central position while the comments can be stuck on separate bits of paper either below the main text or around it. This paper edition gives the opportunity for additional decoration and illustration (with students' drawings or pictures) and will contribute to a more colourful and livelier classroom atmosphere.

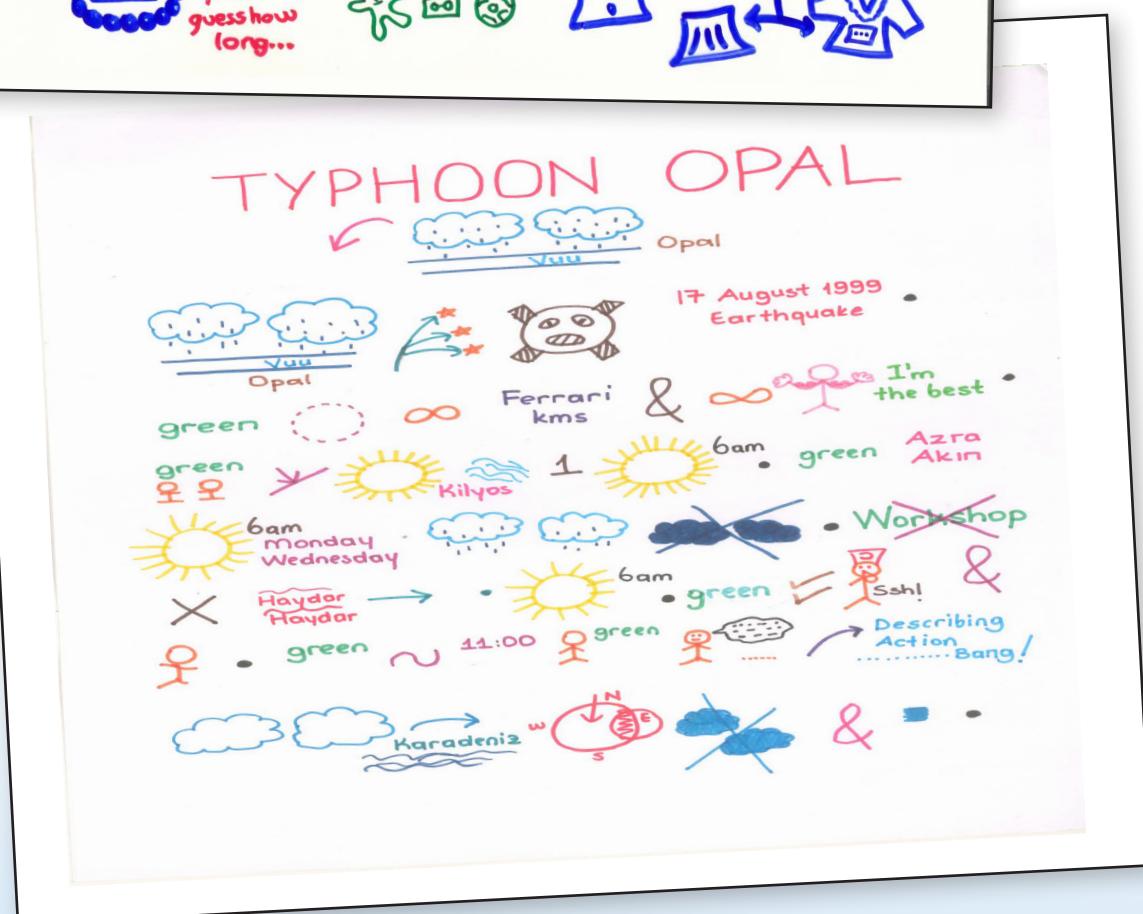
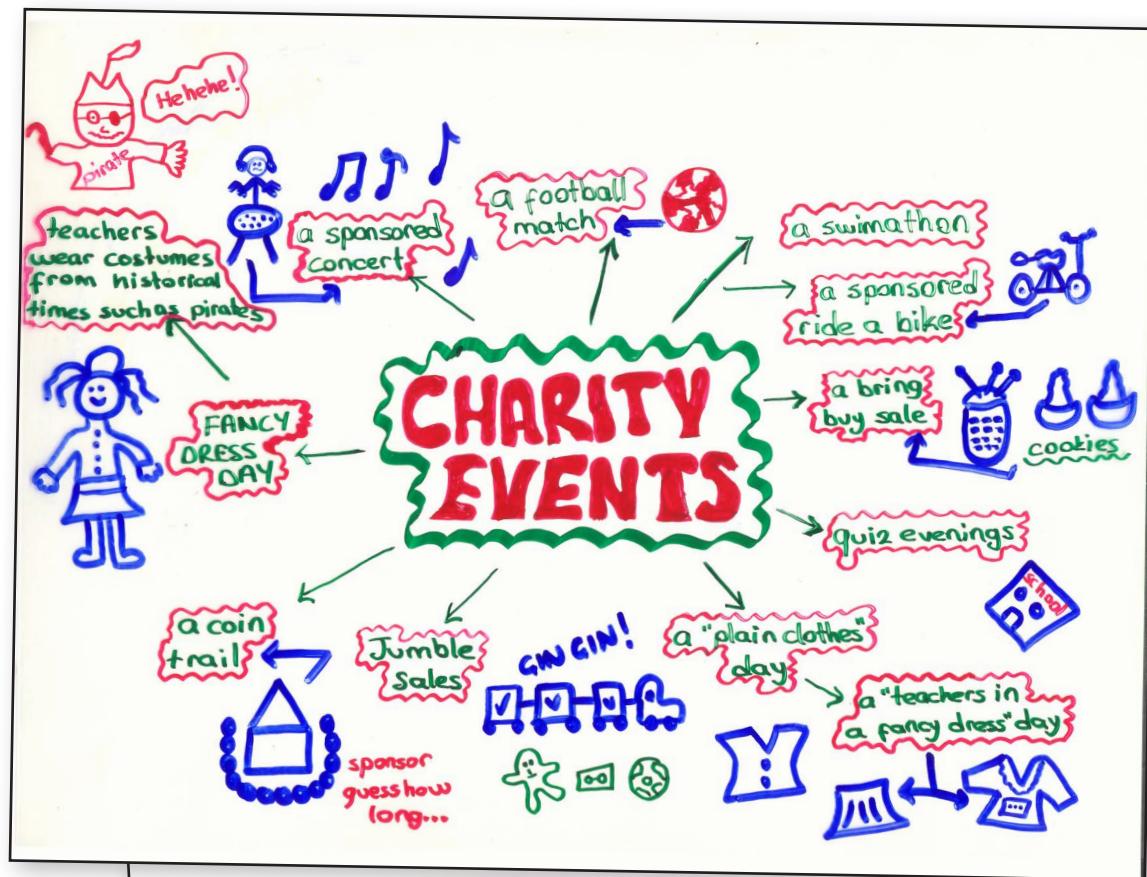
**Objectives:** Production of wide variety of texts in different genres, creating an engaging atmosphere, fostering team work, practising defending one's opinion in public

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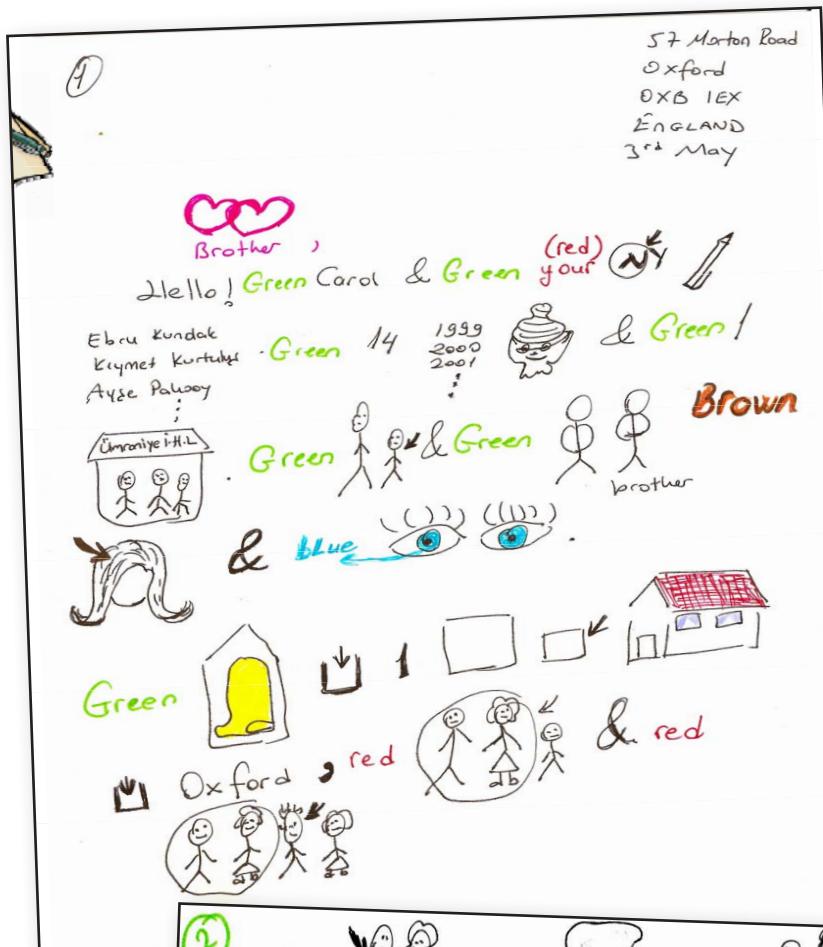
## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - REFLECTION FILES





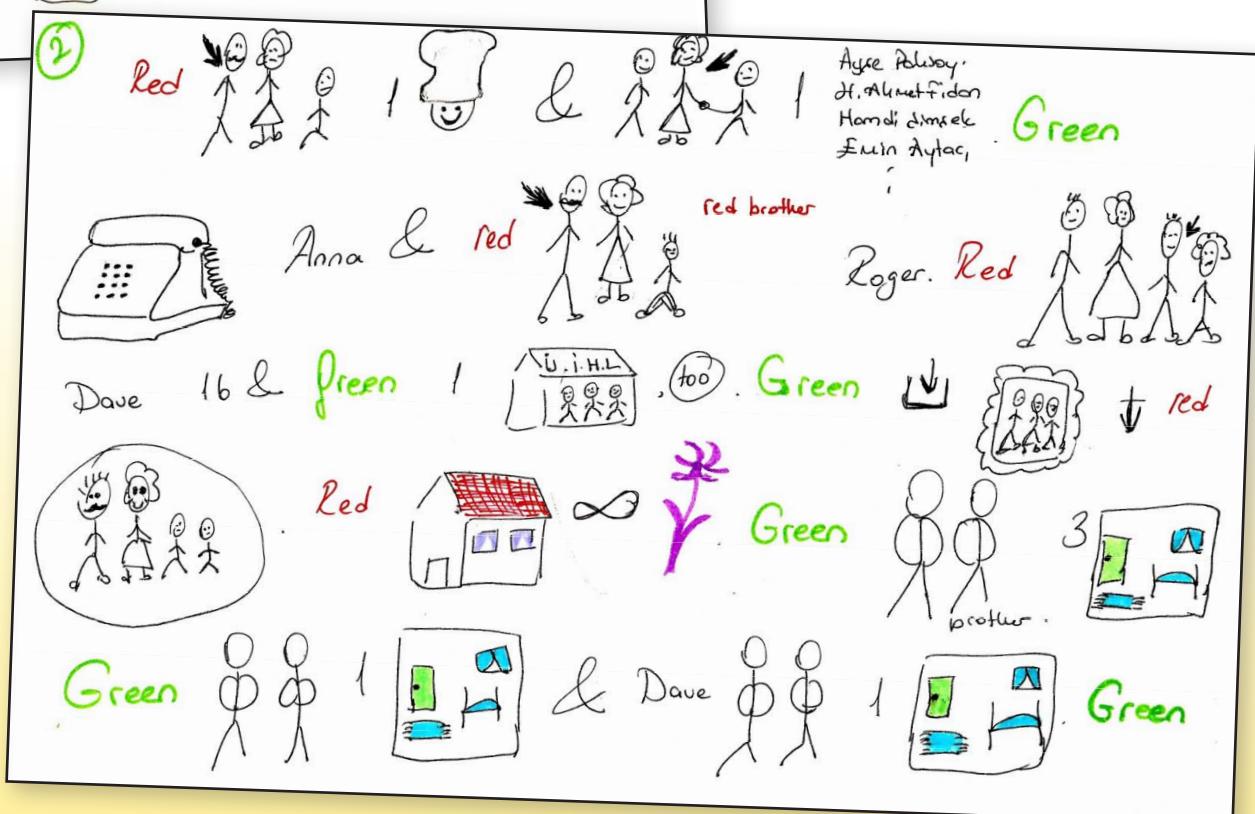
## Student work from Turkey

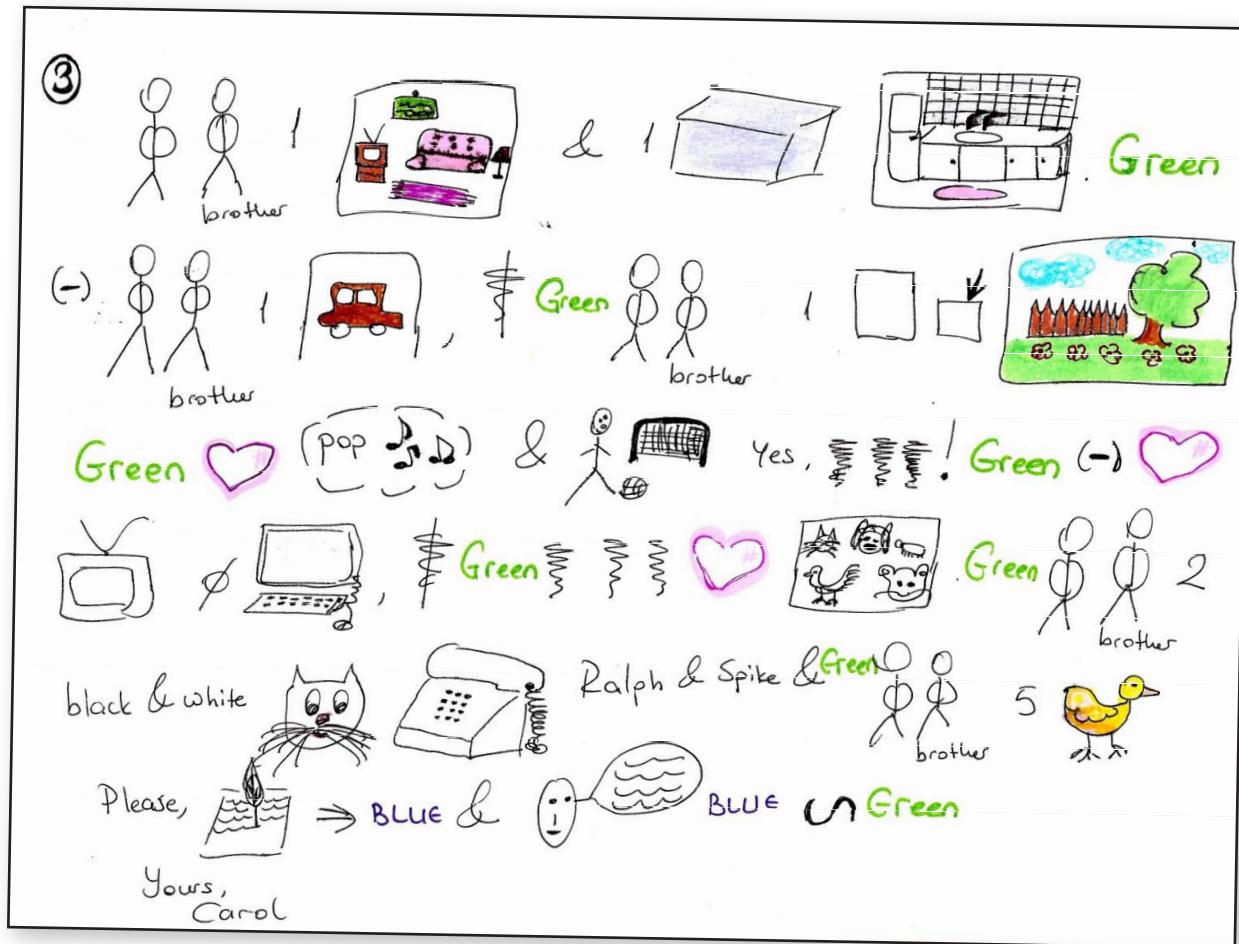
## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - CLUMSY PICTURES



## Translating clumsy pictures into text: Prepared by Banu Yurtseven

Ümraniye İmam Hatip Anatolian High School, Istanbul, Turkey





Dear ,

Hello! I'm Carol & I'm your new penfriend. I'm a student. I'm short and I've got brown hair & blue eyes. I live in a small house in Oxford with my parents & my brother. My father is a cook and my mother's a teacher. She is called Anna & my father's name is Roger. My brother, Dave is sixteen & he is a student, too. He is in the photo of my family.

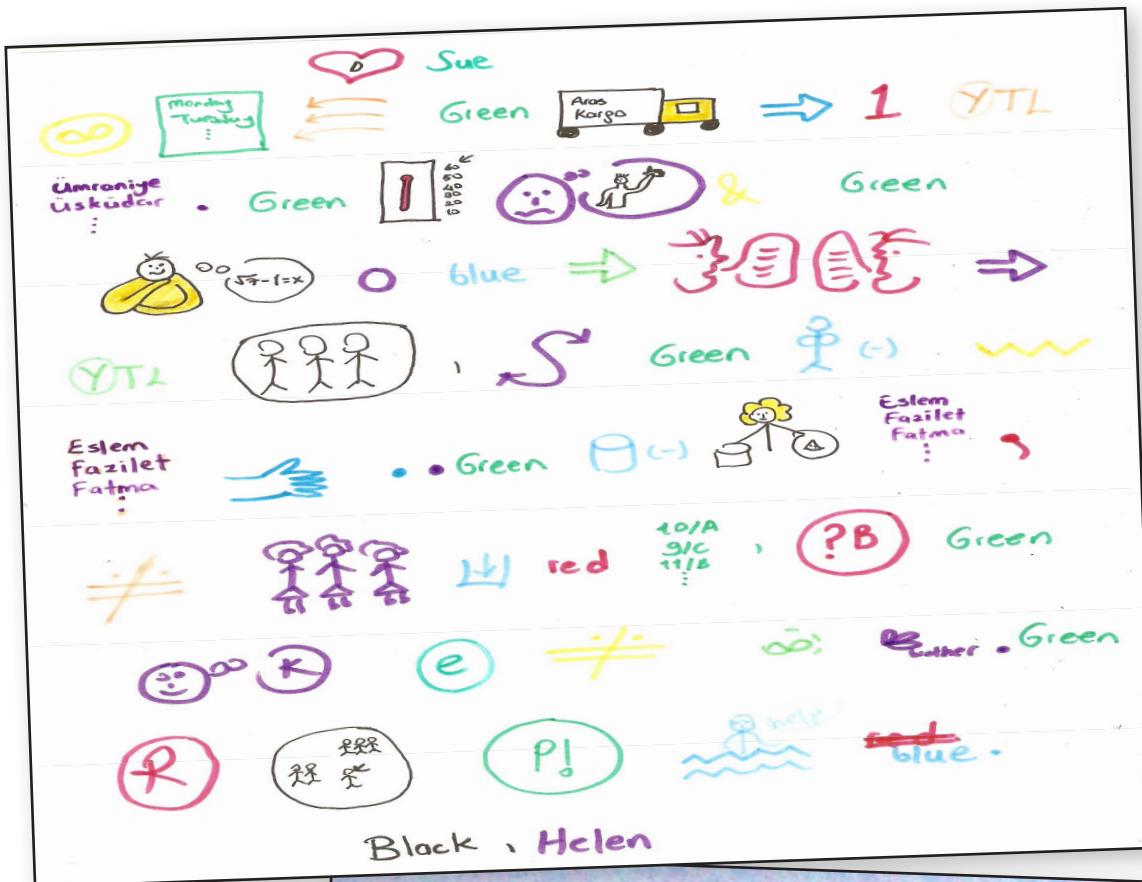
Our house is very nice. We've got three bedrooms. I've got a bedroom and Dave's got a bedroom. We've got a living room and a large kitchen. We haven't got a garage but we've got a small garden ...

I like pop music and football; yes really!! I don't like TV or computers, but I really like animals. We've got two black and white cats, called Ralph and Spike. And we've got five birds ...

Please write to me and tell me about you.

Yours,

Carol



Dear Sue,

**A few weeks ago we moved to a new town. I'm extremely shy and it's difficult for me to talk to new people, so I haven't got any friends here.**

**I can't make friends with the other girls in my class, because they know each other very well.**

**I'm really lonely please help me.**

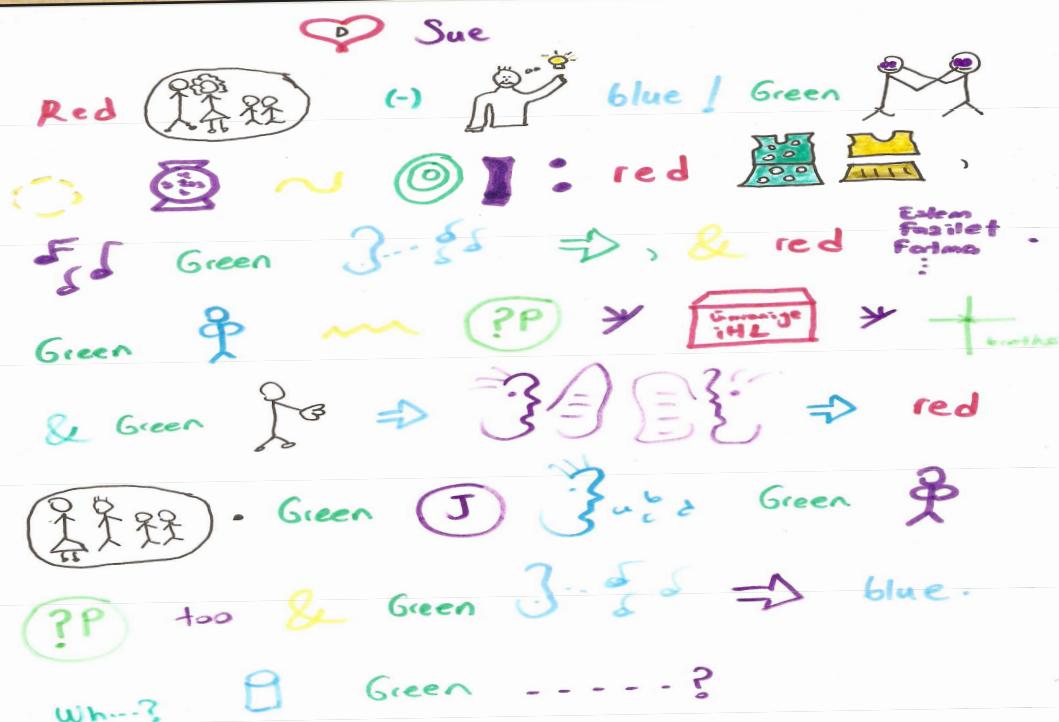
**Yours, Helen**

Dear Sue,

- My parents don't understand me! We argue all the time about everything:

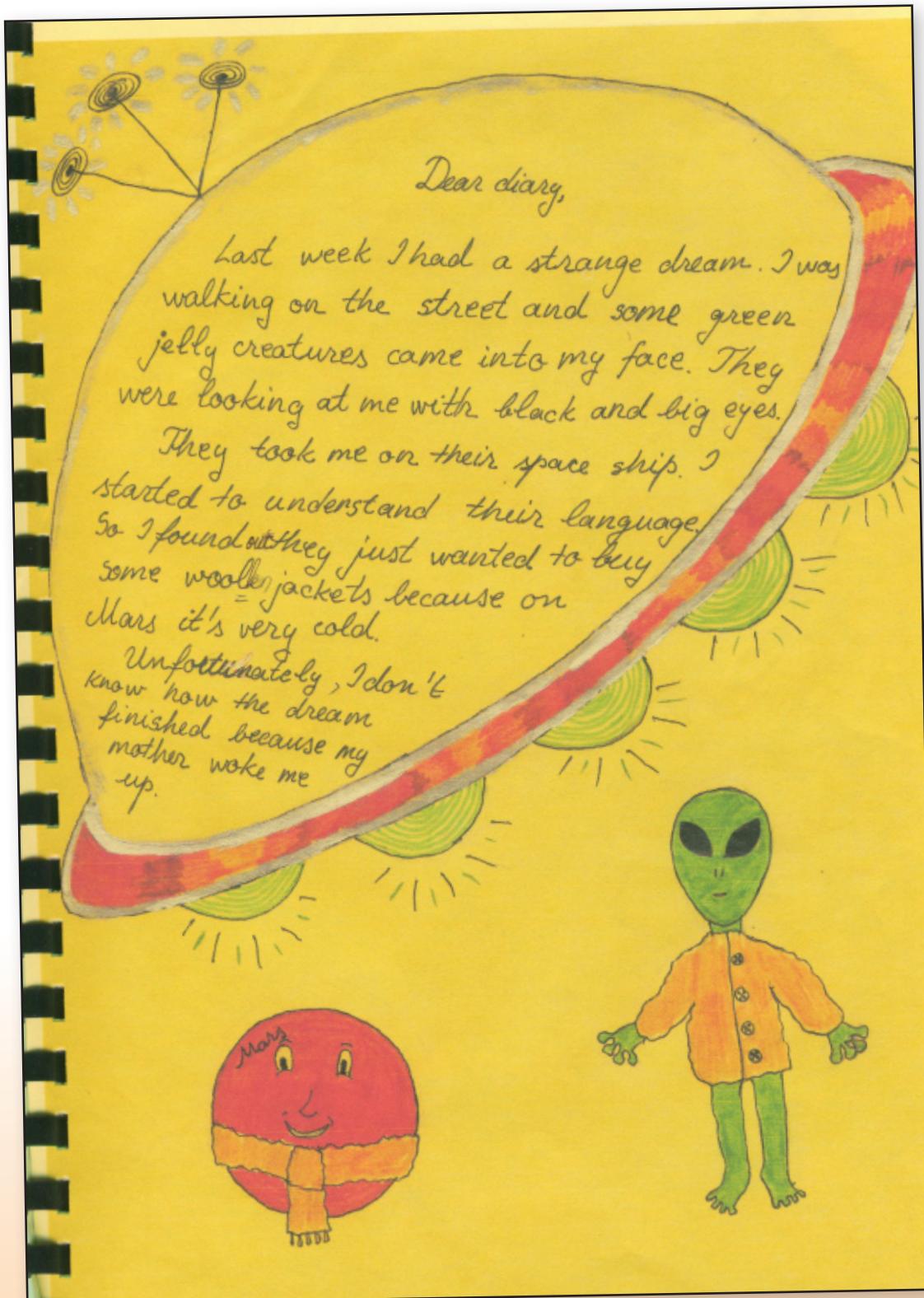
My clothes, the music I listen to, and my friends I have got some problems at school at the moment and I want to talk to my parents. They just say they have got problems, too and they don't listen to me. What can I do?

Yours, John

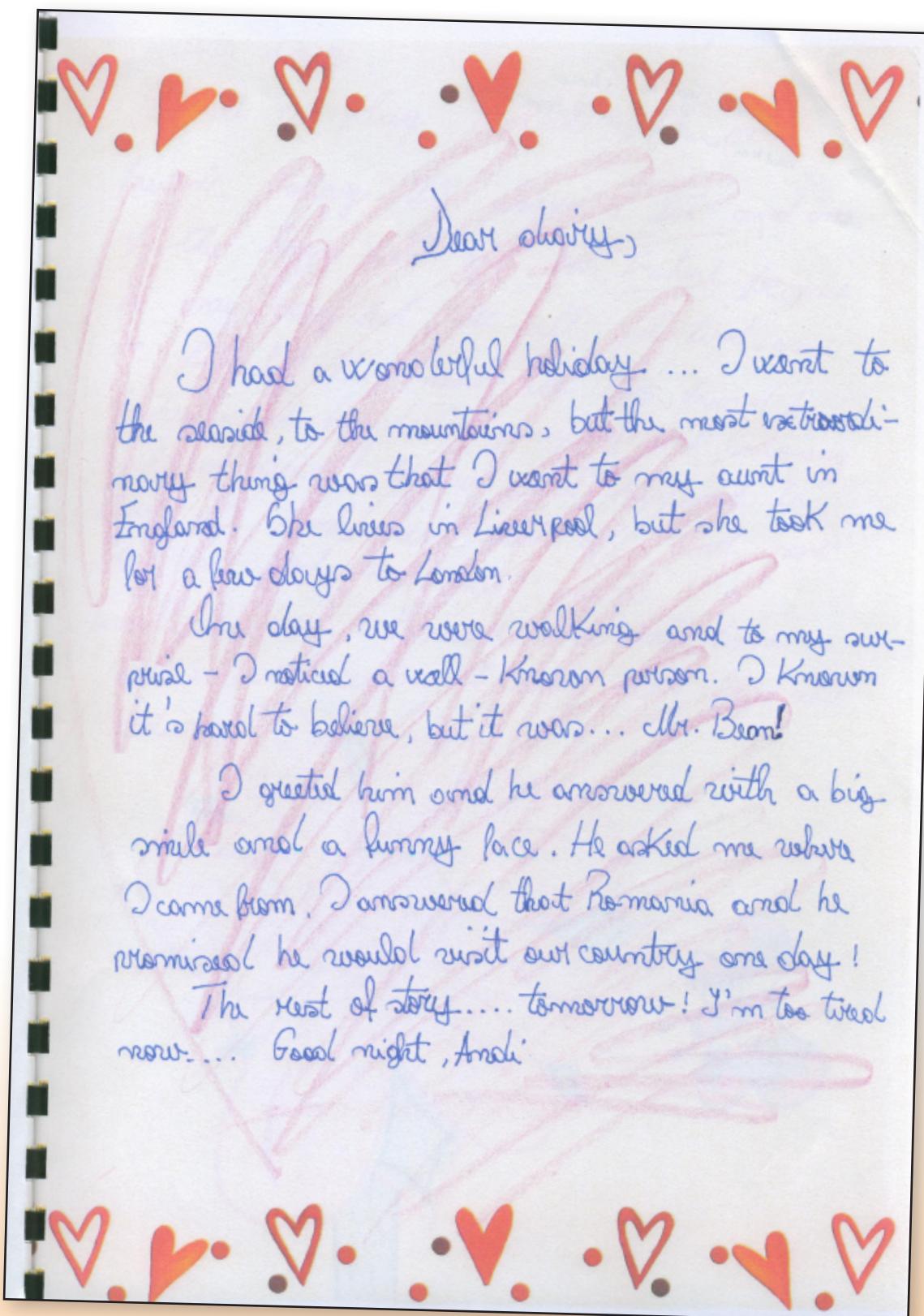


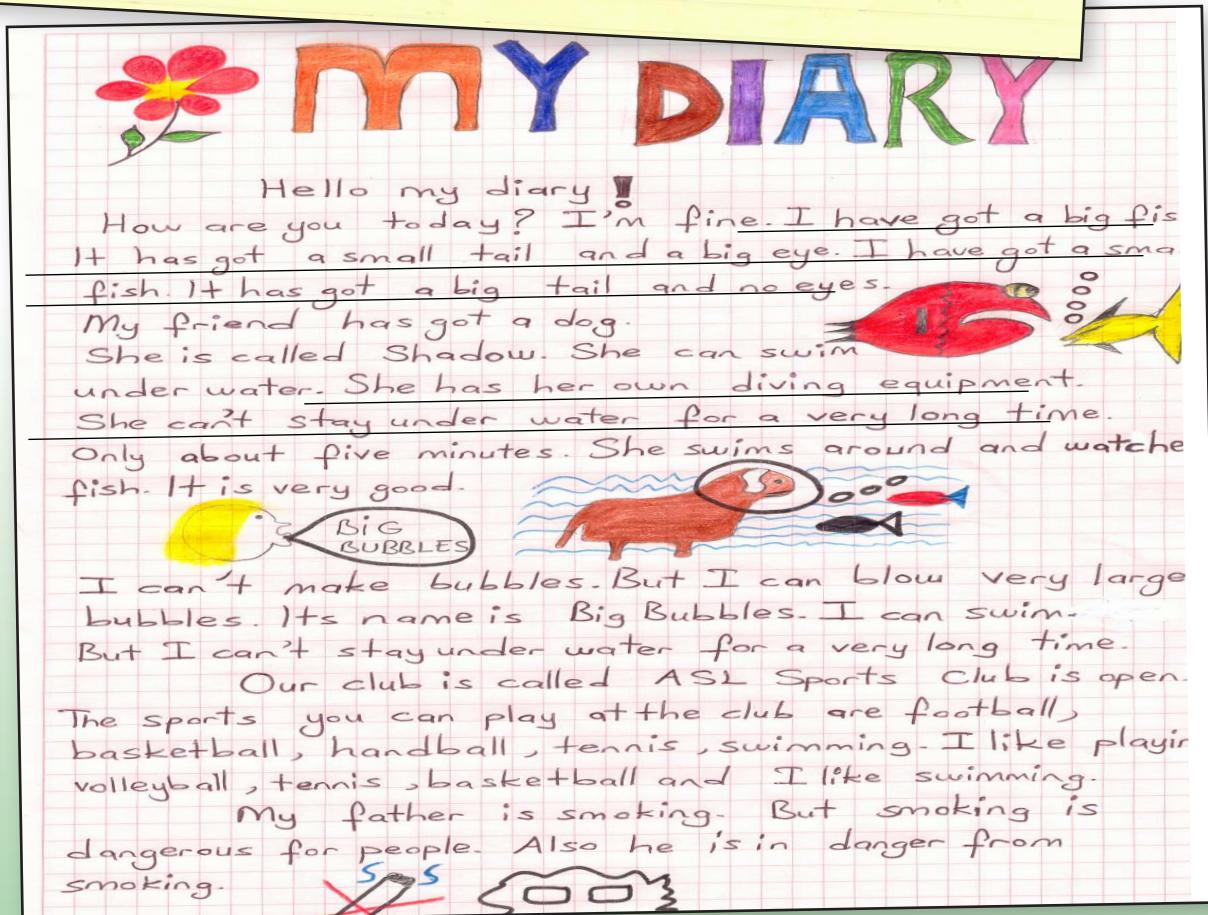
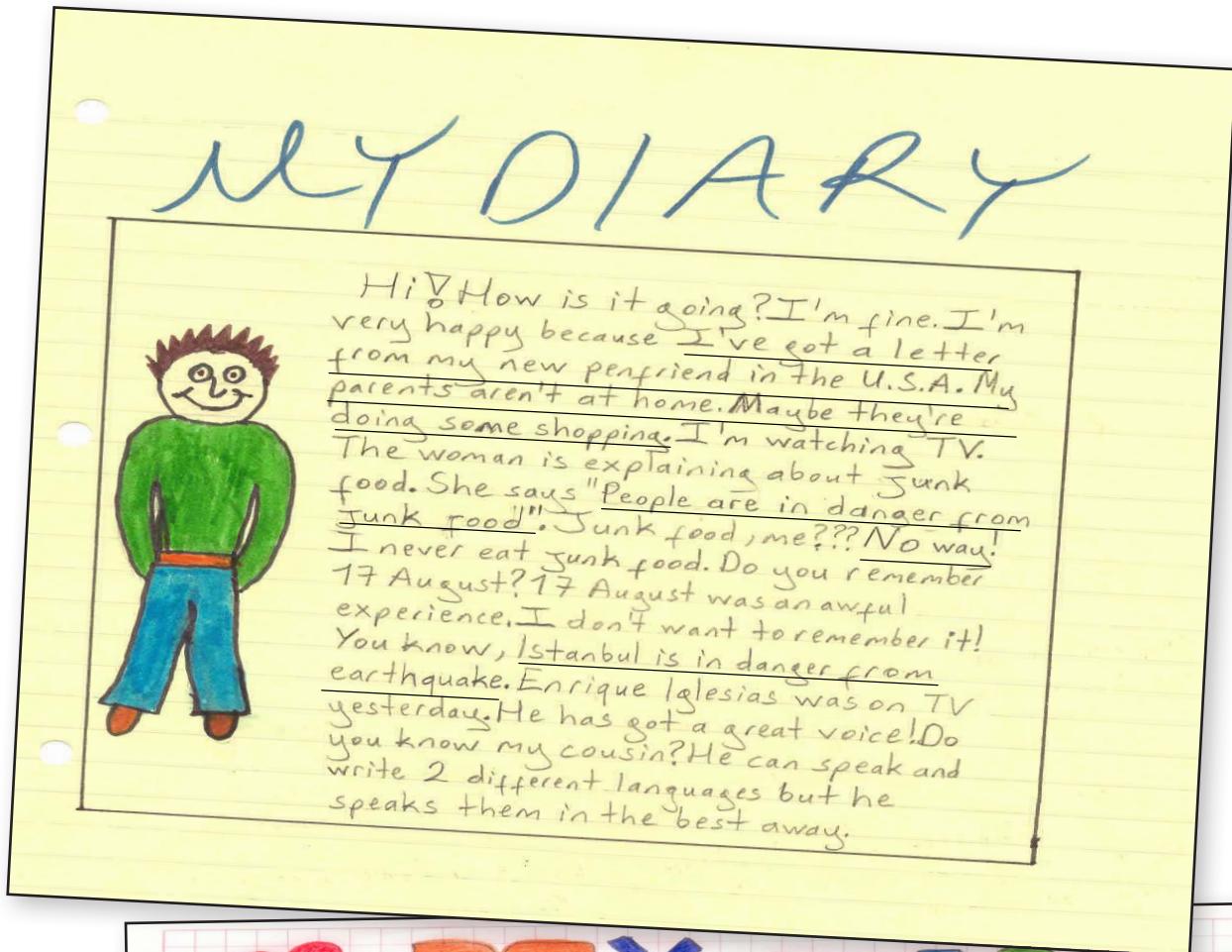
Black, John

## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - INCREDIBLE JOURNALS



Student: Diana Popescu (8th Grade) - Teacher: Daniela Bănică  
Coresi School, Targoviste, Romania





# ~ ~ ~ DIARY ~ ~ ~



Pacesetter

**Jade**

Hello my diary. How are you? Me? Oh, I am not good. Because I have got a lot of homework. But it is okay. You know, I have got a fantastic brain. Anyway. Christmas is coming. I am very excited. I am waiting for the new year impatiently.

I usually go shopping when it is Christmas time. I keep 20 million TL for Christmas. Yes, I never have enough money for Christmas.

Oh, today is Monday. I don't like Monday. On Monday I usually have school. But last Monday I didn't go to school. Because I was on holiday. I was in bed.

Now the weather is cold. It is about 8°. Oh, everything is bad. I am doing my homework miserably. See you soon.

16th December  
2003




Dear My Diary,

Hi! How is it going? I'm fine. Do you know I like yachts? Every year the yacht races take place in the ocean in Japan. When it's the yacht race time I always go to the yacht race. I sit and watch the yachts. It's very amazing. People come here from all over the world for the races. There are about 4 or 5 food stalls here for the people. People eat, drink and of course watch the race. But one day I was at the yacht race. There were violent winds. There was an awful storm. Suddenly bang! Oh... My God! There was one enormous wave and the yacht went over upside-down. I was shocked! I think he wasn't alive but I was wrong. A Japan Navy ship went to rescue him. He was alive and safe. Some men went over the yacht in a small boat. It was an amazing rescue! He had an awful experience! That day was an awful day for me! I don't want to remember it!

DON'T WORRY,  
BE HAPPY...oo

## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - STUDENT WRITING

### Harry Potter in Our World

It was an ordinary afternoon. I was sitting at my desk and reading the latest book about Harry Potter. My classmates were talking about the newest mobile phones and other technological things. I was curious why everybody was so interested in those objects rather than reading a fine book like "Harry Potter". So I went to my friend Radu to find the reason.

"Radu, why is everybody so interested in those "things" rather than a book?"

"Well, Andrei, a book is something that comes from the imagination of a person, but the cell phones can be seen and touched"

"I understand."

I was so disappointed that nobody felt my way, but there was no more time of thinking because the technology teacher entered the classroom.

"Good afternoon, children!"

"Good afternoon, teacher!"

"I have something important to tell you. A special person is going to visit our school, so from now on, today, you won't have classes."

There were shouts in all the class, but only I was calm, wondering who would come to our small school.

Since then, rumours spread that a famous movie-star would come or even the president. No one was sure who would be here with us.

When the time came everybody in school gathered at the front gate. The gates started to open and my heart was beating so hard, that it almost exploded when I saw six kids entering the gate. They were not older than us but very popular. They were Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, Ron and Ginny Weasley, Neville Longbottom and Luna Lovegood.

We thought that they were the movie-stars but something was strange at them. The scar on Harry's forehead was so real. It didn't look like it was made of plastic. No one watching this, I thought that I was wrong. After they were introduced to the children, the headmistress showed them the school. When the headmistress presented them the chemistry and physics labs, they were very surprised. It was very

unusual because I thought that they should have seen things like those.

When the bell rang for the lunch break, Harry and his friends went with us to the canteen to eat. In the canteen there were already two groups: the girls and the boys groups. Everybody finished eating, when Alberto, the worst boy in school, started mocking the guest.

“Who says that you are movie-stars? Humph! I saw better dressed dogs.” he said.

“Watch out what you are saying!” said Ron and pointed to him with a stick that seemed to be a wand.

Then I understood. The scar, their amazement and that wand. I rushed to stay between them.

“What are you doing, Andrew? Get out of the way! I don’t need your protection!”

“Shut up! I’ve saved your life you idiot! These are not movie-stars, but REAL wizards.”

Everybody kept silence and the first who broke it was Ron.

“Finally we have a muggle that is smarter than the others.”

“Ron, don’t call them like that!” said Hermione.

“And we agreed not to show them our wands.” said Harry.

While they were fighting, we were trying to reach the nearest exit like mice surrounded by cats. When we finally reached a door, Ron, with only one swing, locked it. After that we really understood that what I said proved to be true. Harry looked at us and said:

“You don’t need to be afraid, we are not here to kill you. We wanted to learn how a human school is.”

We were relieved, and then we started to show them what kind of homework we got.

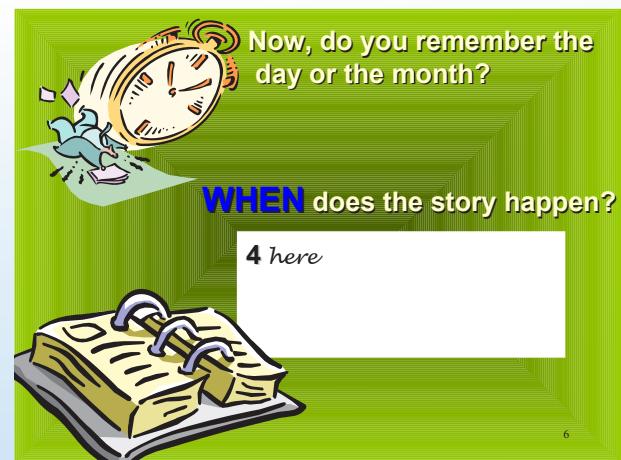
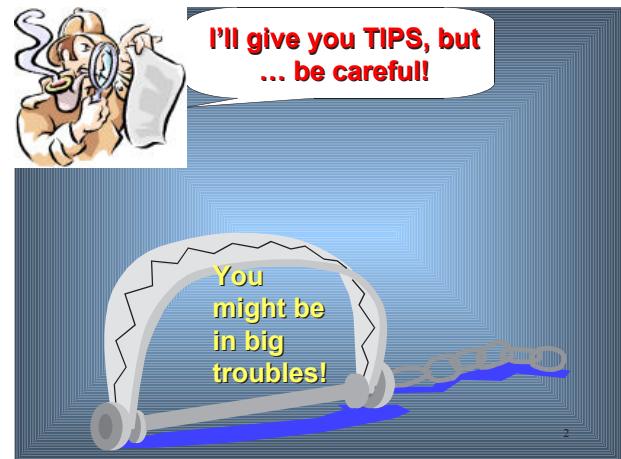
At the end of the day, I was thrilled that I could meet my favorite characters.

**Student:** Mihalache Magdalena (6th grade)

**Teacher:** Aurica Manu  
School No 1 Titu, Romania

## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - PRESENTATIONS

### A Treasure Hunt



By now you know the protagonist, his friends and his enemies. Try to find...

WHAT they did!

5 here



Well, well! You understood almost everything, but...

WHY did they do that?

6 here



You finished your hunt: tell me the end of the story.

7 here



Don't forget to use ... and, or, but, before, then ...

You have got all the clues: solve this and you will be done.

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7$$

= RÉSUMÉ



Can you write here your résumé?

here



Writing



Teacher: Giuliana Marsico

SMS Novaro, Naples, Italy

## What's Your Job?



# Personalities

*What kind of person are you?*

Giulia Santoro - ITIS C E Gadda - Napoli

7

### Useful words

- Child actor
- Alien
- Main character
- Tutor-chaperone
- Short
- Thin
- High voice

Giulia Santoro - ITIS C E Gadda - Napoli

8

That's ok for now....  
Did you enjoy the lesson?

Bye-bye  
See you next week

Giulia Santoro - ITIS C E Gadda - Napoli

9

## SAMPLES AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - OUT-OF-CLASS ACTIVITIES

### English-Language Magazines from Turkish Classrooms

2003

**MAGIC OF ENGLISH**

**GÖZTEPE İHSAN KURSUНОĞLU LİSESİ PREP-B**

CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS

UNICEF

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Amnesty International

JACQUES COUSTEAU

2004

**THE WONDERS OF THE UNIVERSE**

**HOW DO WE CREATE CLUMSY PICTURES?**

From the beginning of the year, all the Prep/B members have been really excited about learning English. Our teacher has given all her energy to us and also we love English more than anything. Because of this; when we learn the contexts by the help of our creative pictures, we can create a wonderful atmosphere and also we've created special signs.

For example, I've found "HAVE" like that. Before we found it, we always used to acting. But during the learning process, we've discovered wonderful signs. So, we've created amazing mixture of acting and clumsy pictures. It is really exciting, isn't it? I think, LIVING PREP/B'S FANTASTIC ATMOSPHERE IS REALLY GREAT! :)

These are some of our special signs:

but	Those → *	like → *	different → ≠
for	these → ::	want → *	all → *
and	make a use → *	like → *	ability: can, could, will be able → *
before	anyway Prep B (we love this word very much)	eg: like → *	to have → *
after	never → X	for example → *	so a lot of → *
in /	already, yet → *	Pain Generator: ambition → *	lovely: ♡♡♡
at →	just → *	Just then → *	need: ☺☺☺
	old → *	workshop: there is → *	Emma: great idea → *
			Do you think that they are really exciting, aren't they? :)

ER

u cut yourself when you are in the towards you. elf. membered that it is in a wrong n the sea, sharks will swim towards Sharks have already come near good bye! you where. falling more than 600 metres a by. I can climb onto the roof of away one of the heavy fuel tanks. You've saved us. Oo Perla, where ng down. :)

23

P-B class life

environment, trees, flowers are very important to us, because at the beginning of the year we didn't have any idea about those trees are really important to us. But by the help of Pacesetter, we've learned environment's beauty. I'll tell how we've learned. Let me talk about this. Of course before the lesson teacher creates a wonderful atmosphere and we feel that we're in a great forest. We feel the great smell of colorful flowers. We walk on the green grass. Oh, it is great and then we've realized lots of fascinating facts about trees. You know rainforests are disappearing forever and in the future people won't be able to breathe easily. There won't be any water. Oh it's terrible, isn't it? Then also litter is a big problem, too. Most of the people drop their litter in the centre of the town. Some people think that worrying too much about litter is silly, but it isn't true and I want to talk about JACQUES COUSTEAU. He was a great environmentalist. He fought all through his life for the environment. While we were learning about Jacques Cousteau, the teacher said unfortunately he died at the age of 87. We cried and felt really sorry about that, because we lived it. Before we learned about the environment, we were picking up flowers, walking on them but after these subjects, we've started warning people who are walking on them and breaking them. The most important message which I want to give you is that we must think about our children's future and world's system. We must be environmentalists. Don't forget:

ALL THE MEMBERS OF PREP-B CLASS ARE ENVIRONMENTALISTS!

PS: (While I was writing this text, I remembered 'DISAPPEARING RAINFORESTS, CORAL REEFS, LITTER EVERYWHERE, JACQUES COUSTEAU'S LIFE AND ENVIRONMENT' contexts from Pacesetter)

CLARA

28

2005

**GÖZTEPE İHSAN KURŞUNOĞLU LİSESİ**

# ENGLISH IS FUN

## USE YOUR IMAGINATION

**WHY DO WE WRITE DIARIES?**

Every person wants to know this question. But no one knows. I think you should have a rest and think about this question's answer.

I think it is a very difficult question. Diary is everything. I reckon, diary is my life. I like my diary more than anything. I can't be expressed in the best way. But it is my friend. It is sometimes very friendly, but sometimes very angry like a person. I think it has got different personalities. I'm sure you are laughing at me. You can think "Don't be silly. You are stupid". But it is wrong.

I want to tell my first diary day. First I went to school and we started lesson. In the lesson teacher said "you should write your diaries as soon as possible". And I began writing my diary. Diary expresses your feelings. I write my feelings down. I write whenever I want. If I'm happy or unhappy, I write my feelings and I write why I am happy or unhappy. Sometimes I draw a picture about my senses. If you haven't done it before, don't worry to be happy. It is not difficult. When you arrive at home, while you are having a rest, you can think about the day, you've just had. Write it! You shouldn't hesitate it doesn't bite you. And you don't need some special equipment just some pages and a pencil. I think it wants to speak to you. It is alive. Imagine it! When I write my diary, I understand I'm right or wrong. I can have a chance to find out my behaviour. For example you'll write your problems. I can write Chris's problem. And I think I'm Chris's man. And I write Chris's problem's answer. I really sort Chris's problem out. Also you can have an opportunity to sort your problem out. And sometimes diary helps me about something. It says "you are true or not! That's why you should take it and write it as soon as possible. You should do it!!!!"

Don't forget! It'll help you.

Julia Sun

I'm sorry for English. I want to tell my first I didn't like English and I always thought worrying too much about it. I want to speak English and I didn't want to speak English and I also wanted to speak English and they didn't talk to me. Now I want to speak English but I'm not as clever as the others and I'm not as clever as the others. Please help me and give me our advice...

^^Jealous^^

I reckon you can act like the others also learned English, in English the others are enthusiastic. You should speak in English and you should solve your problems with your English. You'll be enthusiastic and you'll act as the others. Please help me and give me our advice.

CEKER

Only a few people in this classroom do these kinds of things. Cut it out. Enough is enough. This is the last straw. What else? Although... The other class are in front of us. We have to catch up with them. Give me a word. Give me a dream. Especially Claudio can learn English from songs. Now we will use our imagination and learn this dialogue in the best way. Don't worry, be happy. Vanessa, are you doing your best? Vanessa, who is Gürkan or Seçkin? Are they in this classroom? We have to sort it out. Now I want to tell you something. Vera, I have a word for you, but later. You should look at each other. Are you following the list? They're reading their books. How many books have you read up to now? What about your Turkish exam? Was it good? Use pacesetter English. Your English will turn into Sultanahmet English. You can tell it in English, your English is enough to express everything. What about the missing pages, complete them as quickly as possible. As you see pacesetter is anywhere, anytime. You should write diaries. Don't make jokes in Turkish. You are free to make in English. Put me in a song. I hope she can take this message. Oh, how brilliant children I have. Put a smile on your face. Class atmosphere is different. You can't learn this at home. Never ever.

38



## EDITOR PAGE

Hello our dear readers:

I want to talk about our world but it is a different world. Its name is "ENGLISH IS FUN". In this year, we have learnt English in a funny way that is why, we gave this name to our magazine. We like English more than anything. We are enthusiastic, flexible and confident to learn English. Let's talk about our different world's amazing parts. First of all, names. We changed our names and we had different names from all over the world such as: Saviola, Kewel, Felicity..... I said, we have learnt English in a funny way, by the help of the pictures and dramas. Our teacher can't draw very well. While she is drawing we always laugh at her drawings, she draws casual drawings however, we can remember them more easily, so we can learn everything in the best way. Also we've had enjoyable times, while we are doing dramas individually. We have limited time to finish work in pairs or groups.

Why do you think we are quite successful while we are doing these kind of things? Because of the atmosphere? Nooooo!!!!!! By using our imagination, we learn only events. The important thing is speaking and expressing our feelings in the best way. You should think there are two different parts in our world. Fifty percent of it is using imagination and the other fifty is doing vocabulary notebooks that are checked by Mrs. Gerçeker. You must learn the phonetic alphabet. They help you to speak English with accent. We always put up pictures, projects on the walls and they are colourful, like us. We are a colourful class. We always speak English anywhere and anytime such as; during our phone conversations, sending messages to each other, during the break times.....

Also we have got speaking clubs. While we are in speaking clubs we speak English about everything. We play games, eat something..... The photos are taken during the speaking clubs by me & Michell. Our diaries are the most important things to solve our problems. We write our feelings in our diaries. During the lesson we are listening to Classical Music. It makes us feel on the Scotland Mountains. It completes the classroom's amazing atmosphere and these are the keys of success.

While we are doing this magazine also we reflect something from our hearts. We have given all of our energy so we bet our magazine is fascinating and wonderful. We want you to read our magazine word by word. By the way you can find something from yourself.

I hope you will like reading our fantastic magazine and I'm sure you'd like to read it again and again.....

Magazine Editor

VANESSA MAE (PELİN BÜYÜKYILDİRİM)

Teacher: Pelin Gerçeker

Göztepe İhsan Kurşunoğlu Anatolian High School, Istanbul, Turkey

## THE BSI E-PLATFORM

The BSI e-Platform is a collaborative electronic platform with an educational purpose. The main aim of the platform is to provide a virtual workspace for cooperation and to educate users interested in learning the BSI method. Access to the e-platform is free, so the information and resources on it are available to a wide number of people.

The BSI e-Platform supports the work of the BSI project team and BSI teachers by providing them with an opportunity for online advice and a platform for exchanging comments, opinions and supporting materials, as well as for collecting feedback on the transferability and applicability of the BSI method to other languages and fields.

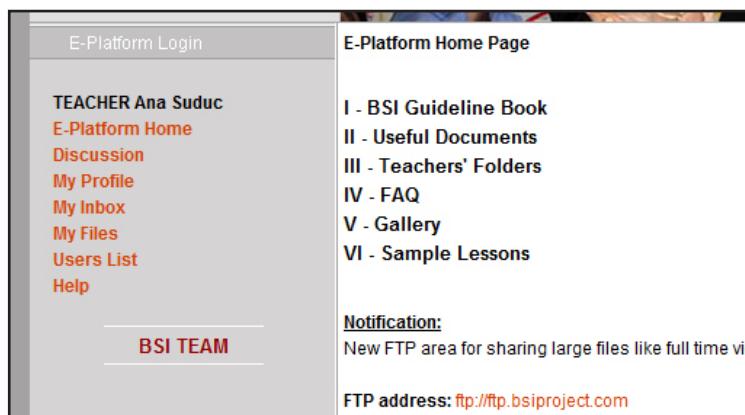
Access to the platform is provided through a user name and password, via the first page of the BSI Project website, <http://www.bsiproject.com/>.



A registered user can access the platform by filling in the username and the password. A new user can create an access account by clicking on the *New User Registration* link. New users must register by providing their personal details: name, surname, e-mail, country, e-platform user name, e-platform password and reasons for registering.

The home page of the electronic platform is divided in two sections. The first section of the platform, the main one, contains a list of links to the main categories of documents

shared on the workspace. On the bottom side of the screen, several general-purpose notices from the system administrator are listed.



In terms of organization, the public information offered on the home page of the platform is divided into six sections and listed as a menu in the main section: *BSI Guidelines Book*, *Useful Documents*, *Teachers' Folders*, *FAQ*, *Gallery* and *Sample Lessons*. When they are clicked, each link of this main menu displays a pop-up menu with related options.

The first section, *BSI Guidelines Book*, will include a book which will describe the methods and its components in addition to sample lesson plans to implement the BSI method in the classroom. These lesson plans will be the best examples, selected from all project partners' countries.

The second section, *Useful Documents*, offers materials which can be used to the classroom. The materials are organized in five categories: *Assessment*, *For Young Learners*, *For Teenage Learners*, *For Adult Learners* and *Foreign Language Teachers*.

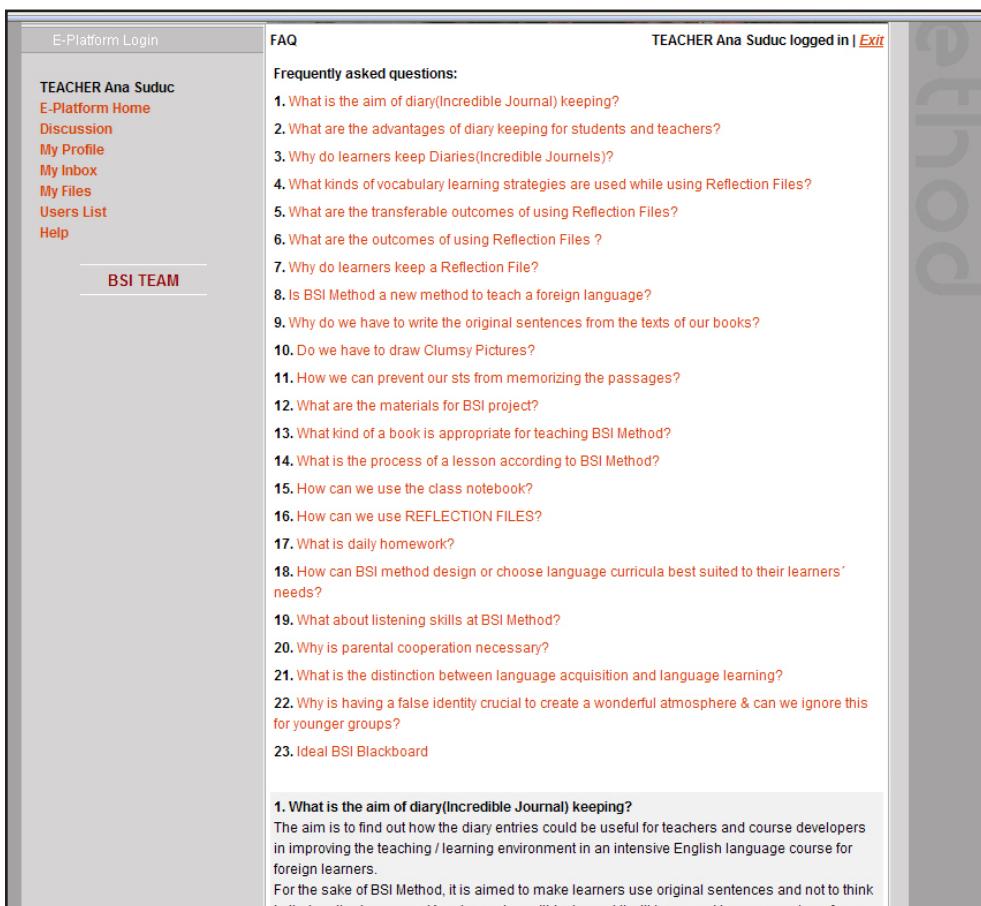
The *Teachers' Folders* section includes all the files uploaded by platform users. The files are presented as a list with details about the teachers who have uploaded files, date of upload and file size. The teacher who uploads the file can also provide information related to the profile of the learners, aim of the lesson, description, activities and materials. As usual, the *Download* links provide the user with the possibility to save the files. These files are mainly examples of BSI elements and products obtained by the teachers who implemented the method. The icons of the files depend on the file type. The icon representing three pages suggests that the content of the file is an Office (text) file. If the material is represented by a tape symbol, the user knows that the file is a video clip. The icons of the image files are small previews of the images.

The search engine at the top of the screen allows users to display only the documents uploaded by a specific user.

<b>Teacher</b>	Elif Alpturer Colakoglu	<b>File Date</b>	<b>File Size</b>
File # 129	common test sample	5/27/2008	0.35 MB
<i>Profile of the learners:</i>			
<i>Aim of the lesson:</i>			
<i>Description:</i>			
<i>Activities and materials:</i>			
 <a href="#">Download</a>			
<b>Teacher</b>	Teslime Goktepe	<b>File Date</b>	<b>File Size</b>
File # 99	fruit&vegetables	5/25/2008	0.05 MB
<i>Profile of the learners:</i>			
<i>Aim of the lesson:</i>			
<i>Description:</i>			
<i>Activities and materials:</i>			
 <a href="#">Download</a>			
<b>Teacher</b>	Basak Yaylali	<b>File Date</b>	<b>File Size</b>
File # 288	BSI TV :)	10/22/2008	23.38 MB
<i>Profile of the learners:</i>			
<i>Aim of the lesson:</i>			
<i>Description:</i>			
<i>Activities and materials:</i>			
 <a href="#">Download</a>			

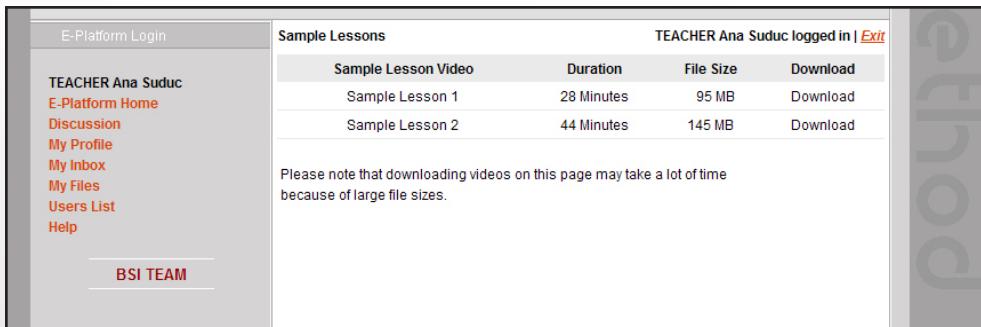
The *Frequently Asked Sections (FAQ)* section presents dozens of frequently asked questions with extensive explanations. Responses explain the details of the BSI method and help users learn and utilise the method in their classrooms. The frequently asked questions give assistance to the teachers who share the same problems while adapting and implementing the BSI method.

The *Gallery* section provides sample lessons, resources and materials that could be used in applying the BSI method in the practice. The subsections of this category are: *Clumsy Pictures*, *Magazine* and *PPT Seminar by Pelin Gerçeker & Zuhal Yılmaz Doğan*. These examples are offered in order to give to the platform user new ideas related to BSI method implementation.



The screenshot shows the E-Platform Login page. On the left, there is a sidebar with links: E-Platform Login, TEACHER Ana Suduc, E-Platform Home, Discussion, My Profile, My Inbox, My Files, Users List, and Help. Below these is a 'BSI TEAM' button. The main content area is titled 'FAQ' and shows 'TEACHER Ana Suduc logged in | [Exit](#)'. It features a 'Frequently asked questions:' section with 23 numbered questions. The first question is highlighted in a grey box with its text repeated below it. The text for the first question is: '1. What is the aim of diary(Incredible Journal) keeping? The aim is to find out how the diary entries could be useful for teachers and course developers in improving the teaching / learning environment in an intensive English language course for foreign learners. For the sake of BSI Method, it is aimed to make learners use original sentences and not to think in their mother tongue.'

In the *Sample Lessons* section, the user can find video recordings of two lessons that implement the BSI method. These lessons are very useful examples, since they incorporate all aspects of BSI and are provided by the BSI method promoter, Pelin Gerçeker.



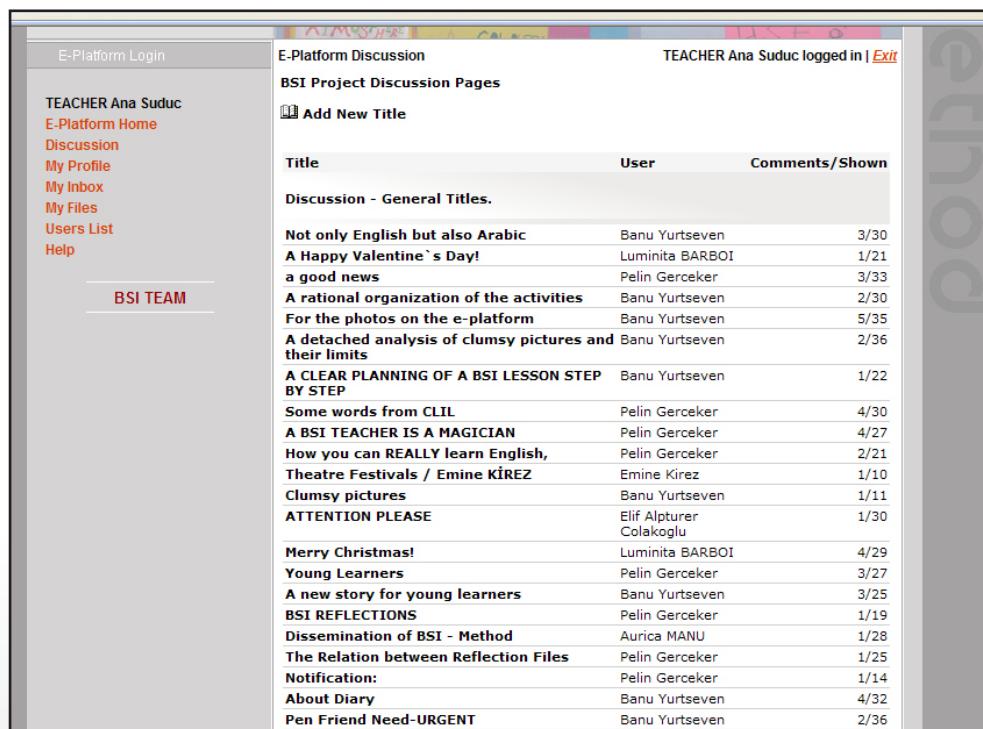
The screenshot shows the E-Platform Login page. The sidebar on the left is identical to the previous screenshot. The main content area is titled 'Sample Lessons' and shows 'TEACHER Ana Suduc logged in | [Exit](#)'. It features a table with four columns: 'Sample Lesson Video', 'Duration', 'File Size', and 'Download'. There are two rows in the table: 'Sample Lesson 1' (28 Minutes, 95 MB, Download) and 'Sample Lesson 2' (44 Minutes, 145 MB, Download). Below the table, a note states: 'Please note that downloading videos on this page may take a lot of time because of large file sizes.'

The second section of the platform, positioned on the left of the screen, consists of a user menu granting access to the discussion area, the user profile, inbox, files and to a list with all platform users. This user menu is accessible from any page of the platform.

The *E-Platform Home* link returns the user to the first page of the platform, the page displayed after the login process.

The e-platform serves as a two-way channel through the *Discussion* section, not only for instruction to the trainees, but also for receiving feedback about the BSI method and from teachers who apply it. Through this section, the teachers trained in local training sessions will be able to consult issues and problems that occur over the course of the test-implementation of the BSI method.

The section is structured as a forum organized by topics. All the new titles are marked until the user has read them. The section already includes several topics, but the user can create his or her own by clicking on the *Add Title* link. To create a new topic, the user must have at least two comments in previous discussions. To participate in an existing discussion, the user will use the message area at the bottom of each page.



The screenshot shows the 'E-Platform Discussion' section. The left sidebar includes links for 'E-Platform Login', 'TEACHER Ana Suduc', 'E-Platform Home', 'Discussion', 'My Profile', 'My Inbox', 'My Files', 'Users List', and 'Help'. A 'BSI TEAM' section is also present. The main area displays a table of discussion titles, users, and comment counts. The table has columns for 'Title', 'User', and 'Comments/Shown'. The 'Comments/Shown' column includes a link to 'Exit'. The table lists various topics such as 'Not only English but also Arabic', 'A Happy Valentine's Day!', 'a good news', 'A rational organization of the activities', 'For the photos on the e-platform', 'A detached analysis of clumsy pictures and their limits', 'A CLEAR PLANNING OF A BSI LESSON STEP BY STEP', 'Some words from CLIL', 'A BSI TEACHER IS A MAGICIAN', 'How you can REALLY learn English', 'Theatre Festivals / Emine KIREZ', 'Clumsy pictures', 'ATTENTION PLEASE', 'Merry Christmas!', 'Young Learners', 'A new story for young learners', 'BSI REFLECTIONS', 'Dissemination of BSI - Method', 'The Relation between Reflection Files', 'Notification:', 'About Diary', and 'Pen Friend Need-URGENT'. The 'Comments/Shown' column shows values like 3/30, 1/21, 3/33, 2/30, 5/35, 2/36, 1/22, 4/30, 4/27, 2/21, 1/10, 1/11, 1/30, 4/29, 3/27, 3/25, 1/19, 1/28, 1/25, 1/14, 4/32, and 2/36.

Registered users have the ability to change personal information on their profile by using the form accessible through the *My Profile* link. The user data available and changeable via the user profile form are: platform access password, e-mail, birthday, branch, institution, country, interests and picture.

Users also have the possibility to receive and transmit messages to any other user registered on the electronic platform by accessing the *My Inbox* link. Unread messages will be highlighted by a light green background, whereas the read ones will be gray. There is a simple form below the list of received messages which allows the user to create a new message. The recipient is selected from pull-down menu, which contains a list of user

names and their respective country codes.

The platform provides a user page for loading files to be shared in the workspace, accessible through the *My Files* link. Documents, images and movies can be uploaded on the platform. Each file can be assigned a number of details. The documents uploaded by each user are displayed the *Useful Documents* section (described above).

The user can easily find the names of all BSI platform users, grouped by role (*teachers*, *experts*, *coordinators* and *admins*) by accessing the *Users List*. By clicking on a user name, that user's profile is loaded in a new window. The user can send a message to a user only by clicking on his or her e-mail address (if an e-mail client has been configured).

The *Help* link from the menu offers the user useful information related to using the platform.

The electronic platform complements the general information about the BSI method provided on the project website and helps teachers to better understand the method in order to implement it correctly. The e-platform it is aimed at identifying any problems that may arise during method implementation in order to improve the method and adapt it to specific national contexts.

## DRAFT CASE STUDY - TURKEY

### Is the Broad Sweeps of Imagination (BSI) Method Effective in Helping Turkish Students Acquire the English Article System?

**DEPARTMENT:** Yeditepe University Language Teaching ELT MA Program

**COURSE:** Research Project, Spring-2009

**INSTRUCTOR:** Assist. Prof. Dr. Yasemin YILDIZ

**SUBMITTED BY:** Handegül ALTAN

#### 1. Identity of the school

*Location:* Istanbul (Turkey)

*School name:* Göztepe İhsan Kurşunoğlu Anadolu Lisesi (High School)

*School website:* <http://www.bsiproject.com>, <http://www.gikal.k12.tr>

*School phone number:* +90 (216) 355 56 69

*Contact person:* Handegül Altan

*Contact phone number:* +90 (505) 252 46 79

*School location:* urban

*School sector:* public mixed upper-secondary school

*Students enrolled:* 590

*Languages spoken at home:* Turkish

*Languages taught:* English, German

#### 2. Description of initiative

Teachers' experiences have demonstrated that students who have learnt all the details of grammar rules are often still reluctant to speak English. Even if they can successfully complete the most challenging worksheets full of puzzling grammatical exercises, they struggle even to introduce themselves in the target language. The 'Broad Sweeps of Imagination' (BSI) method is a new collaborative foreign-language teaching method, in which learners are given relatively more autonomy than the other conventional teaching

methods. While traces of other methods based on learners' communicative competence and creativity are certainly present in the BSI method, BSI expands on their goals and techniques in several ways. Key features of the BSI method include dramatization, pictograms ('clumsy pictures'), teaching pronunciation and fostering creativity and enthusiasm.

**Purpose of study:** The purpose of this study is to test the effectiveness of the BSI method in teaching the usage of articles in English, a very problematic area for Turkish foreign-language students. It was hoped that the outcome of the study could show the effectiveness of the BSI method by demonstrating concrete and measurable results in order to present it as an alternative solution to teaching the English article system.

### 3. Methodology

**Participants:** Twenty tenth- and eleventh-grade students at Göztepe Anatolia High School participated in this study. Students were divided into two groups. Group A, the experimental group, contained ten students, and Group B, the control group, contained ten students in eleventh grade. Mixed-ability students with basic, intermediate and advanced English skills were selected from two different classes.

For the experimental group, the BSI method had been implemented in English classes since the beginning of the second term of the previous academic year. Meanwhile, the control group had never been taught using the BSI method. Students were chosen from different grades in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the method over time.

**Materials and instruments:** A general text concerning education was adapted and transformed into two tests. Test 1 was a gap-filling test in which the student was required to fill in the missing articles. The purpose of this test was to lead the students to potential errors of syntax where articles might be plausible. The test measured how well students could recall the omitted articles. The second test was a picture-based free-writing test, in which the students tried to create a meaningful story on the basis of a series of pictures given. The purpose of this test was to evaluate students' article usage outside of an obligatory context such as gap-filling.

**Data analysis:** To evaluate the results of the gap-filling tests, tests were corrected using an answer key. The total score of each student was determined. In the free-writing task, each article used was counted and categorized according to the type of error committed. Next, the mean of the test for each class was calculated and compared. The mean for each section was also used to measure the difference between two classes.

---

#### 4. Findings

**Free-writing test:** Due to the impossibility of predicting the number and type of articles used, articles used by students were observed and categorized into three groups, indefinite (a/an), definitive (the) and zero articles. Usage errors were coded as 'overusage' and 'underusage'. 'Overusage' refers the excessive usage of articles, while 'underusage' refers the lack of articles when necessary. Tables 1, 2 and 3 below present the results of correct usage of indefinite, definite and zero articles in the free-writing test:

Table 1

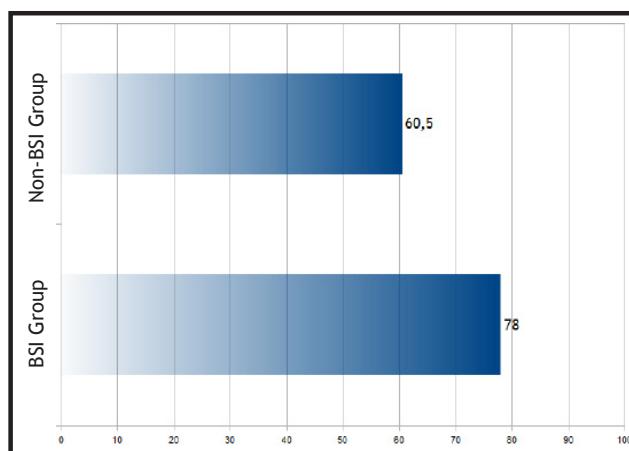
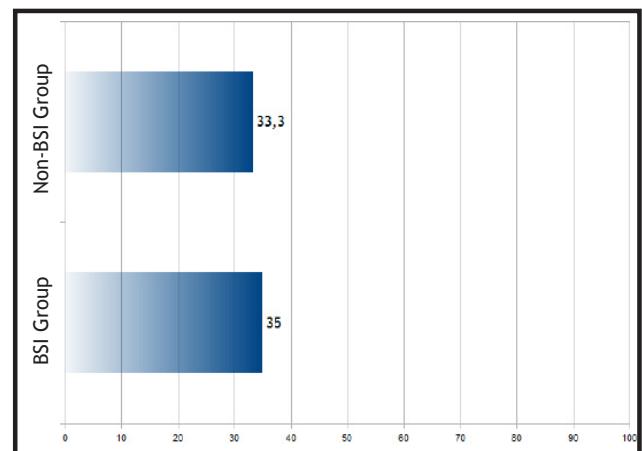


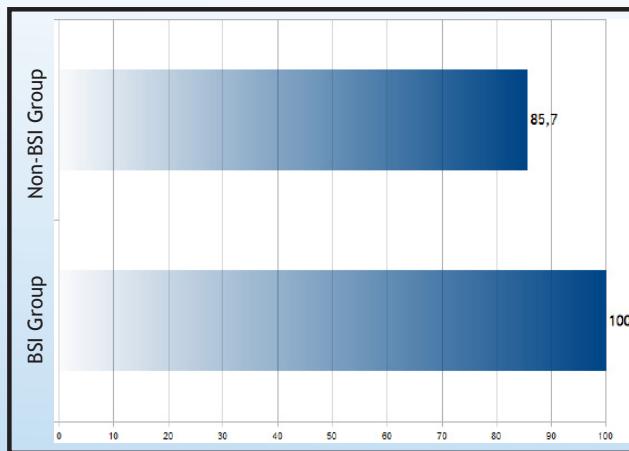
Table 2



Percentage Correct Usage of Indefinite Article

Percentage Correct Usage of Definite Article

Table 3

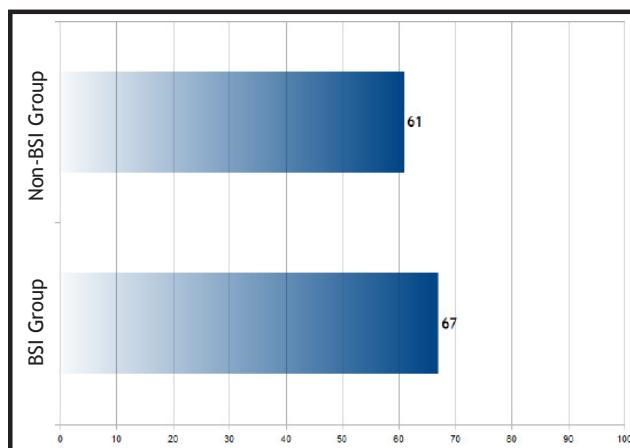


Percentage Correct Usage of No Article

When the correct usage rates for each group of articles are compared among both student groups, we see that the BSI group is more successful than the control group. It is also important to take into account grade-level differences between the two groups as a crucial factor while focusing on the success rates (the control group contained older students).

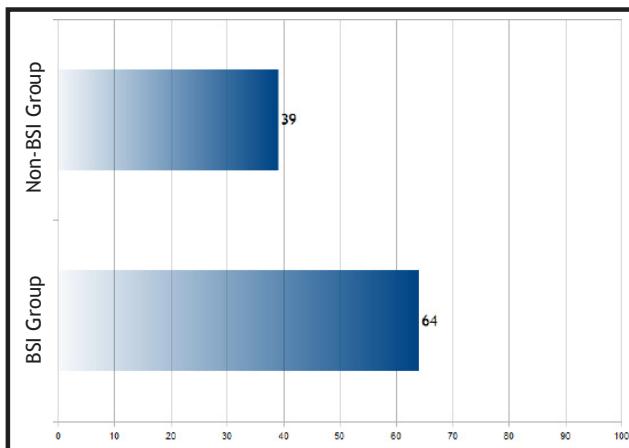
**Gap-filling test:** Students were asked to supply missing articles in several written contexts and were given the choice between 'a', 'an', 'the' or 'no article'. The correct answers contained seven instances of indefinite articles, twelve definite articles, and six 'no article'. The article usage errors were coded as 'overusage' and 'underusage', as in the free-writing evaluation. Similarly, correct usage rates and percentages were assessed for both groups to determine the usage frequency of article types (see the following tables):

Table 4



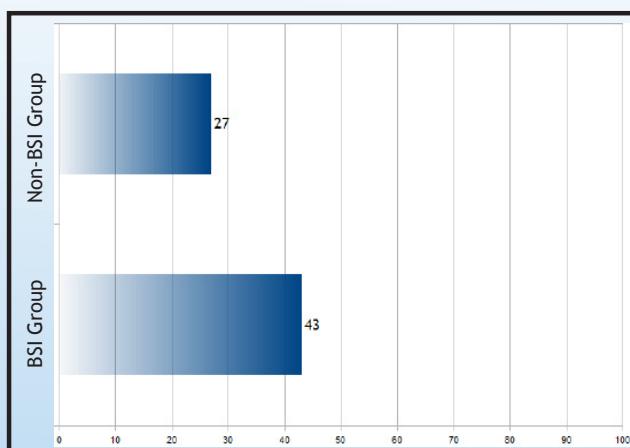
Percentage Correct Usage of Indefinite Article

Table 5



Percentage Correct Usage of Definite Article

Table 6



Percentage Correct Usage of No Article

## 5. Conclusions

**Practical implications:** Because their native language does not use articles, Turkish learners of L2 English generally experience difficulties acquiring fluency in the English article system. It is apparent that existing language-teaching methods, particularly those which attempt to overcome the article problem by using mechanical drills, are useless. Since many learners still have problems with articles, such methods appear unsuccessful, at the very least, in enabling long-lasting learning. On the other side, creating a classroom atmosphere for students to experience the language with all their senses appears to be more useful than forcing learners to complete grammatical drills or detailing explicit rules. In this context, the BSI method could be a solution for both teaching and learning the article system.

**Originality and value:** Since there is not yet any literature evaluating the BSI method other than general sources on its constituent techniques, most sources on the efficacy of the method come from the experiences of the teachers themselves. While this is the first study of its kind to test the BSI method in a problematic area of language acquisition, we believe it is important that empirical studies such as this one continue to be used to evaluate, publicize and improve BSI.

### Photos from our ITT Course in Sinaia, Romania, 27 May 2009



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*All photography provided by BSI teachers.*



*ITT Course in Sinaia, Romania*



*Project coordinators visit a school in Varna*

THIS BOOK PRESENTS an outline for the Broad Sweeps of Imagination (BSI) Method, a project designed to disseminate an innovative method of teaching foreign languages across Europe.

The method combines different approaches and techniques for learning new information and for foreign-language teaching which, combined in an integrated set, has proven its effectiveness for rapid building of communicative skills among foreign language learners. The BSI method combines visual elements ('clumsy pictures') and approaches that give learners an opportunity to use what they learn in other courses.

In addition to its effectiveness for communicative foreign language learning, the BSI method fosters multicultural awareness and intercultural competencies, integrated in the foreign language learning process.

This guidelines book reviews the main elements of the BSI method: enthusiasm, teaching pronunciation, correct use of texts, clumsy pictures, dramatization, out-of-class activities, reflection files and evaluation. Each of these sections is accompanied by teachers' own reactions to implementation. Part 2 of this book of guidelines provides readers with a set of examples and tools to implement the BSI method in daily lessons. The book concludes by discussing how we are disseminating the BSI method through the BSI e-platform, sharing implementation strategies with foreign-language teachers around the world.



**BROAD SWEEPS OF IMAGINATION**



**Education and Culture DG**

**Lifelong Learning Programme**

The content of this guidelines book is the sole responsibility of the partnership, and it in no way represents the views of the European Commission or its services.

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*Cover photos: Children across Europe make use of the BSI Method.*